Doll - vol 2
by Mitsukazu MIHARA
Don't have volume 3.
Enjoy anyways.
Kanzashi

DOLL
MITSUKAZU MIHARA
2

Manga
Science-Fiction
USA $9.99

MITSUKAZU MIHARA

In these unforgettable, gripping stories, dolls are androids that appear to be more human than human. Here, a boy receives a doll that he hopes will replace his abusive mother; a doll gives strength and hope to a young girl dying of cancer; and terrorism and deception escalates when a doll is put on a search-and-destroy mission. In these haunting tales of mere machines, *Doll* proves to be all heart.

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DOLL

- FOREWORD -

Created in Our Own Image

At this point in the history of science fiction, so many stories have been imagined about artificial intelligence that it has grown into its own very substantial sub-genre. Each of these stories adds to a greater debate, theoretical as it might be, on the developing relationship between man and machine. Popular stories such as Bicentennial Man and The Matrix depict a broad world of interaction (in most of which mankind declares superiority over its creations) and, in doing so, expose mankind's collective folly in believing that only the human perspective on life and intelligence is the right perspective.

Doll follows in the tradition of such stories. However, I feel that it furthers the debate by bringing the reader closer to the emotional center of man through his interaction with artificial beings. It demonstrates how that which is unemotional can have profoundly emotional effects. Author Mitsukazu Mihara poeticizes the relationship between machine and man, as poets before have breathed insight into seemingly static objects (Keat's Grecian Urn, Donne's Relic, Mahon's Tins.) The well-explored issue of the equality of artificial beings in human society isn't at the forefront of this book. In fact, it is taken for granted that artificial beings are not equal in the eyes of humanity. What is at the forefront of Doll is the fragility of man and how the idealization of artificial beings is the starkest reflection of that debility.

--Luis Reyes

Poem References:
John Keats, *Ode to a Grecian Urn*
John Donne, *The Relic*
Derek Mahon, *Apotheosis of Tins*

DOLL

VOLUME 2

BY

MITSUKAZU MIHARA

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Doll Volume 2

created by Mitsukazu Mihara

Cover design by Suzuki Seiichi Design Office

Translation - Yuki N. Johnson
English Adaptation - Simon Furman
Copy Editors - Suzanne Waldman and Peter Ahlstrom
Retouch and Lettering - James Dashiell
Cover Layout - Patrick Hook

Editor - Rob Tokar
Digital Imaging Manager - Chris Buford
Pre-Press Manager - Antonio DePietro
Production Managers - Jennifer Miller and Mutsumi Miyazaki
Art Director - Matt Alford
Managing Editor - Jill Freshney
VP of Production - Ron Klamert
President and C.O.O. - John Parker
Publisher and C.E.O. - Stuart Levy

A TOKYOPOP® Manga

TOKYOPOP Inc.
5900 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036

E-mail: info@TOKYOPOP.com
Come visit us online at www.TOKYOPOP.com

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Like any successful company, the SG Corporation doesn't rest on its laurels. It's always working to develop newer, more diverse, and more sophisticated Dolls. Kaoru and Motohiko Kirishima, two pioneers of Doll development, were the co-creators of the prototype "Sterol-2" Doll. With Kaoru as the project leader and Motohiko as the research assistant, the Sterol-2 was to be the most advanced Doll ever created, capable of preserving the world's greatest minds...even after death. To Motohiko, the Sterol-2 Doll was also to be the newly married couple's first "baby."

I'M STILL WORRIED ABOUT THE LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS WE'RE PLAYING GOD HERE, AREN'T WE?
CREATING SOMETHING THAT'S NO LONGER QUITE A MACHINE SOMETHING MORE HUMAN THAN HUMAN

Dolls are human-like androids manufactured by the SG Corporation. A Doll can fulfill many varied needs and serve any number of purposes, including personal assistant, secretary, cook, maid, laborer, companion, lover...and, of course, status symbol.

There are others who push the boundaries of Doll development...though in a much less official capacity. "Remodellers" are people who illegally alter Dolls. Sometimes, people want Dolls that are either unavailable... or unaffordable... and that's where the Remodellers come in. Special orders are their specialty... though, like any illegal deals, there are no receipts and absolutely no returns.

BIO MECHANICAL TRANSPLANTS REAL SKIN AND HAIR GRAFTS A WHOLE NEW NERVOUS SYSTEM AND AN AI UPGRADE
PLUS ONE OR TWO LITTLE REFINEMENTS HERE AND THERE OPTIONAL HUMAN EXTRAS IF YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN

Like most machines, Dolls were created to make humanity's existence better or easier in some way. However, the true test of any device's benefits is not the intent of the designers...but rather the actions of the users.

Well into the development of the Sterol-2, Kaoru developed a mysterious, degenerative mental condition with symptoms that are similar to Alzheimer's disease. Despite access to the top doctors in Japan's foremost neural hospital, nothing could be done to help Kaoru's condition.

Desperate for some way to save his brilliant wife, Motohiko used the Sterol-2 prototype to try to house a copy of Kaoru's mind... though he quickly realized the error of his ways. Soon afterward, Motohiko resigned from the SG Corporation to take care of Kaoru full-time. Leaving all the project notes so that others could pick up where he and Kaoru left off, Motohiko stipulated that no part of their work could be used to create likenesses of actual people...and that no human memories would be implanted into a Doll.

LIST 7

DOLL 2

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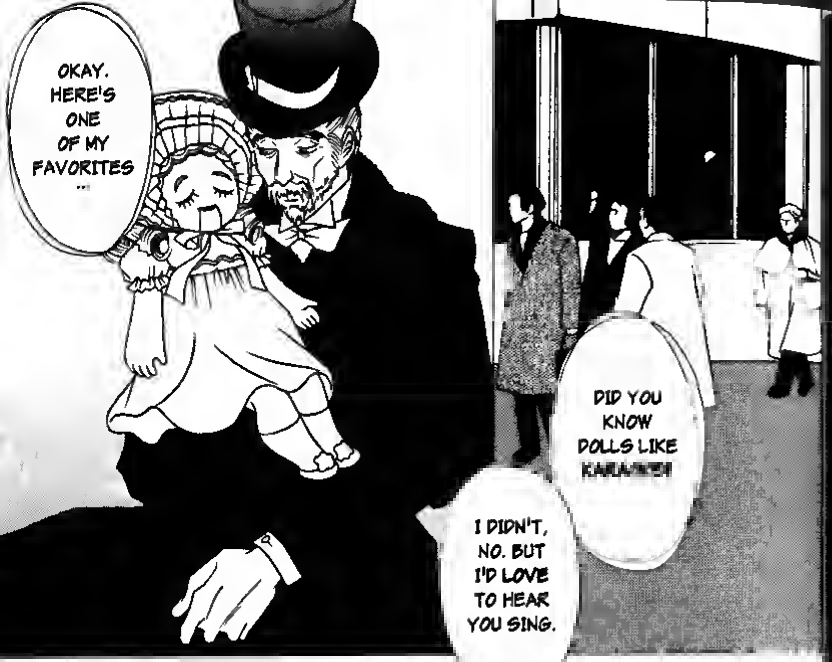
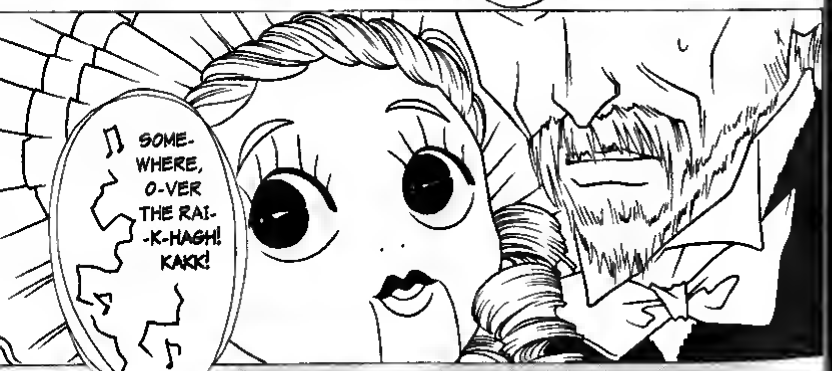
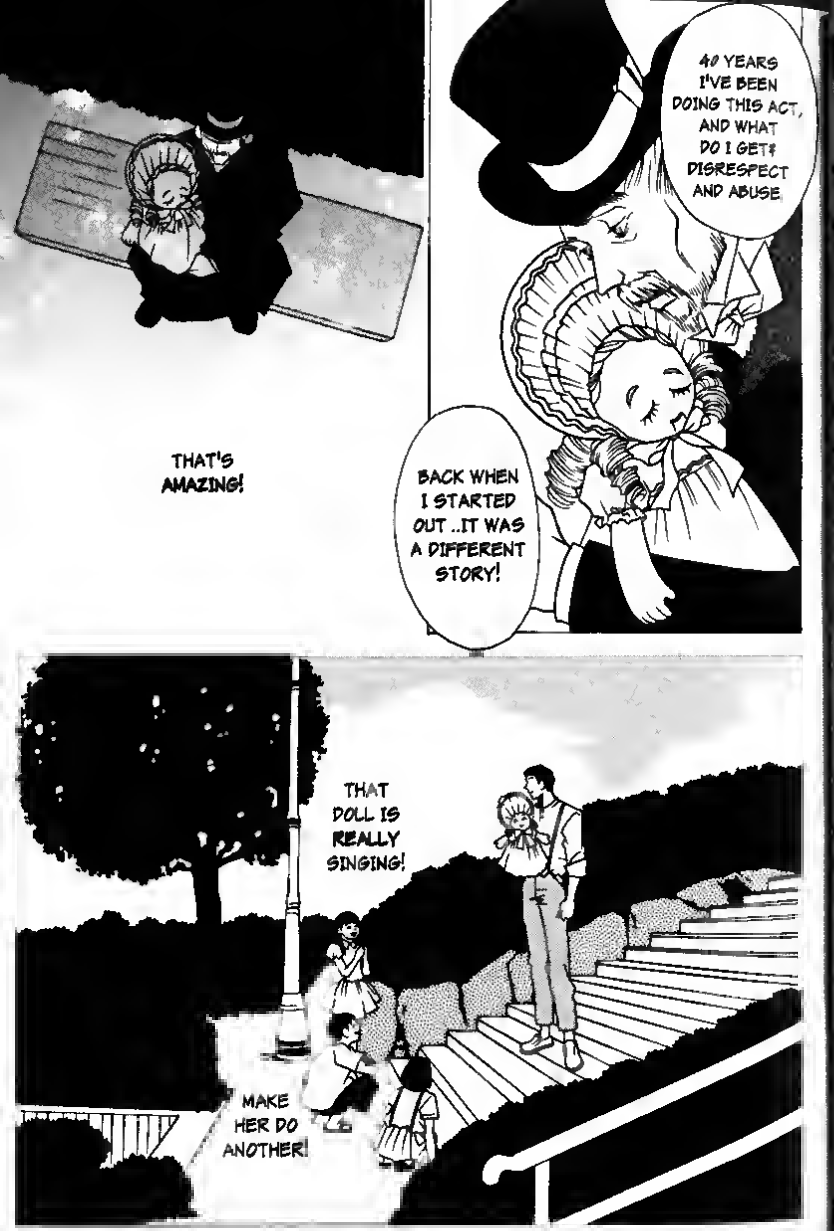

OKAY. HERE'S ONE OF MY FAVORITES ...
DID YOU KNOW DOLLS LIKE [redacted]?
I DIDN'T, NO. BUT I'D LOVE TO HEAR YOU SING.


♫ SOME-WHERE, O-VER THE RAI- -K-HASH! KAKK! ♫

EE-UU!
HA!
HA HA!

7 a doll

Twang!
Twang!
—wuh!


40 YEARS I'VE BEEN DOING THIS ACT, AND WHAT DO I GET? DISRESPECT AND ABUSE.
BACK WHEN I STARTED OUT..IT WAS A DIFFERENT STORY!
THAT'S AMAZING!
THAT DOLL IS REALLY SINGING!
MAKE HER DO ANOTHER!

CHECK OUT THE THRASH JUDY GARLAND! WHAT IS THAT...
...SOME KIND OF JINGLE FOR COUGH DROPS? HA HA!
NO, HEY-- DON'T GO, OLD MAN... WE LOVE THE ACT!
ENCORE, ENCORE!
YOUNG PUNKS-- WHAT DO THEY KNOW?!

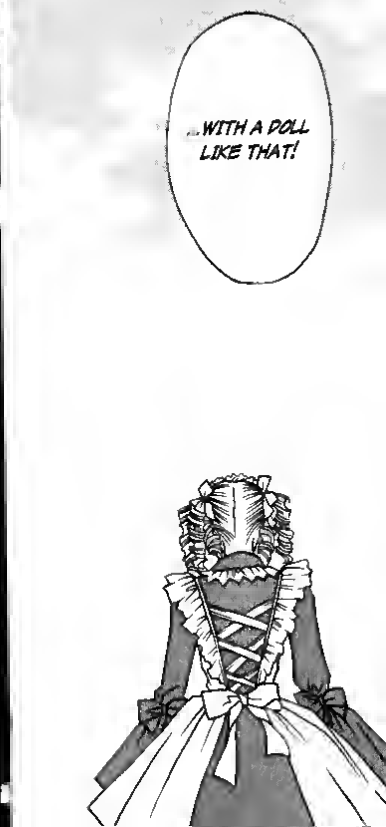
WHAT? ARE YOU KIDDING? THOSE THINGS COST MORE THAN A CAR! TWO CARS!
HEY! LOOK--A DOLL! I WISH WE COULD AFFORD ONE OF THOSE.

I REALLY DO!
DADDY, I LOVE IT WHEN YOU SING TO ME.
Haa-
Kha-
Gasp-

HEY! HEY! HOLD UP. ISH THISH FOR REAL?
IT'S, LIKE, SOME KIND OF VENTRILOQUISM ACT, RIGHT? I DIDN'T KNOW PEOPLE STILL DID THAT!
EVER THINK YOU MIGHT NEED A CAREER CHANGE, OLD MAN? YOU KNOW, GET A PROPER JOB!
YEAH- HIIK!
THIS IS WHAT I DO.
WHAT I'VE ALWAYS DONE.

IMAGINE WHAT I COULD DO, WHAT I COULD ACHIEVE...

Meiji dori Ave
ADERANS


...WITH A DOLL LIKE THAT!

Smak
WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM? SOME KIND OF STREET BEGGAR?
I'LL TEACH YOU TO SHOW SOME RESPECT!
CRAZY OLD FOOL! COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY THIS ISN'T YOUR FACE I BREAK.

REALLY? TOUGH WAY TO MAKE A LIVING HERE..

HEY! GET AWAY FROM HIM OR I'LL CALL THE COPS!

HOW DARE YOU!

JUST SIGN HERE AND HERE. OH, AND HERE.
HONESTLY! ALL THIS PAPERWORK... JUST TO GET RID OF ONE DOLL!
IT'S THE LAW, MA'AM. CAN'T HAVE PEOPLE JUST THROWING 'EM IN THE GARBAGE.
GOTTA RECYCLE THESE DAYS. THIS ONE'LL BE REMODELLED AND UPGRADED, PUT BACK INTO COMMUNITY SERVICE.

LEAVE ME ALONE! JUST... LEAVE ME ALONE!
YOU OKAY? WANT ME TO CALL AN AMBULANCE?

HEY-- DON'T MENTION IT!
ビデオ LOCK

...WITH A DOLL LIKE THAT!
Hnh!
Hnh!
Hnh!
Hnh!

OKAY, WE'RE DONE. TRUCK'LL BE BY TO PICK HER UP IN A FEW MINUTES.
THANK YOU.

ドン
ドン
ドン
IMAGINE WHAT I COULD ACHIEVE...

HANDSOME? COME NOW!
ONCE, MAYBE, WHEN I WAS YOUNG. BACK THEN I COULD REALLY PULL IN THE CROWDS
PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AROUND TO SEE MY ACT. I PLAYED TO PACKED HOUSES EVERY NIGHT.
I HAD TALENT, YOU SEE? THAT'S WHY...
...YOU ABANDONED YOUR FAMILY?
ABANDONED? NO, THAT'S NOT SO! I HAD MY CAREER TO THINK OF, THAT'S ALL. I COULDN'T LET UP, NOT WHILE THE BOOKINGS KEPT COMING IN...
I WAS GOING HOME, I SWEAR. BUT SOMEHOW...
...IT JUST NEVER HAPPENED.

Hhhh...
YOU'RE... BEAUTIFUL! PERFECT!
ALMOST... HUMAN.
THANK YOU, KIND SIR. YOU'RE VERY HANDSOME YOURSELF.

♫
HUH? RIE? RIE, IS THAT YOU?
...I LOVE YOU SO MUCH!
THANK YOU, DADDY...

SING FOR ME, DADDY...
...SING "OVER THE RAINBOW."
SOME-WHERE O-VER...

...I'M GOING HOME!

THAT WAS "OVER THE RAINBOW"...
...MY FAVORITE SONG.
I HOPE YOU ENJOYED IT.
わあ

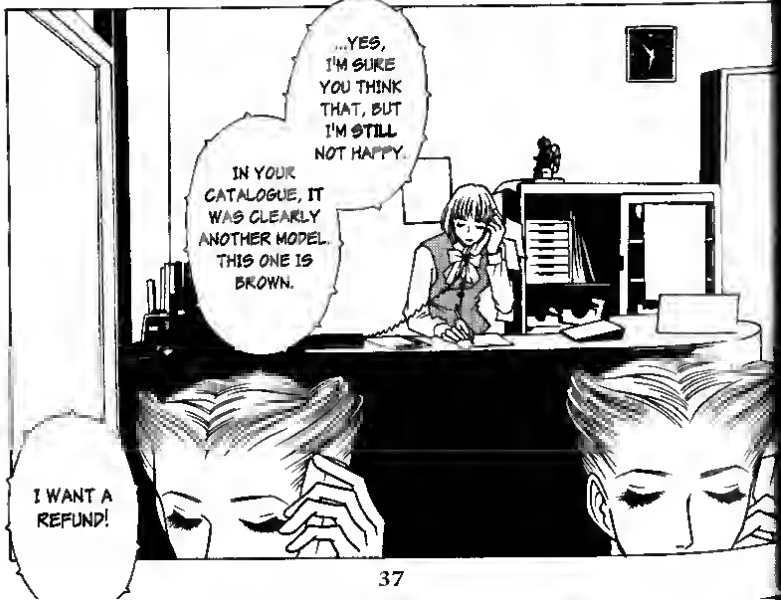
I THINK... YES, IT'S VENTRILOQUISM. LOOK CAREFULLY AT HER LIPS.
IS THAT DOLL REALLY SINGING? IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
AMAZING!

LIST 8

HEY, OLD MAN, YOU'VE STILL GOT IT! OUT-STANDING!
HEY, AREN'T YOU GOING TO TAKE A--

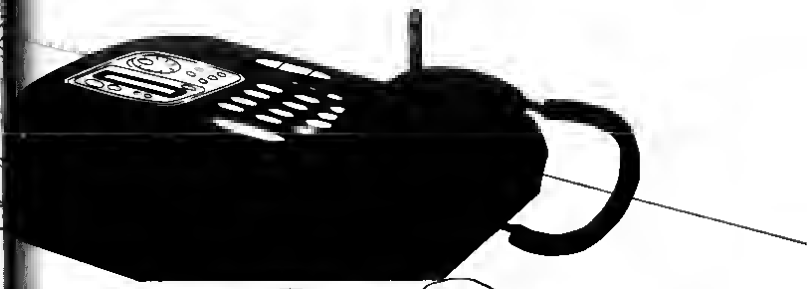
HMM! HE...HE'S DEAD!
BUT HOW--?

DADDY, DADDY! WELCOME HOME...


...YES, I'M SURE YOU THINK THAT, BUT I'M STILL NOT HAPPY.
IN YOUR CATALOGUE, IT WAS CLEARLY ANOTHER MODEL. THIS ONE IS BROWN.
I WANT A REFUND!

8. MIKA

I WISH I WERE A DOLL.



PHU! POOR MIKA. BUT I SUPPOSE THERE HAS TO BE AT LEAST ONE HUMAN IN THE DEPARTMENT TO DEAL WITH THE REALLY STICKY CUSTOMERS.
ALL THE OTHER WORKERS IN HER DEPARTMENT ARE DOLLS, RIGHT?
YEAH. THE STRESS LEVELS ARE HIGH, AND DOLLS JUST SEEM TO COPE WITH THE MONOTONY BETTER.
I WONDER HOW SHE COPES!
HELLO, THIS IS MIKA. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM?

Need your customer feedback reports by 5PM!
THAT'S NO PROBLEM, MADAM. WE'LL ARRANGE TO HAVE THE DEFECTIVE ITEM PICKED UP.
YES, OF COURSE. I APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE.
I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE DOES IT! ALL DAY IN CUSTOMER SERVICE, DEALING WITH THIS COMPLAINT OR THAT PROBLEM...
...AND SOMEHOW MS KOBAYAMA ALWAYS MANAGES TO KEEP A SMILE ON HER FACE!

SHE'D REST A LOT EASIER KNOWING I WAS--
MARRIED? HOW MANY TIMES, MIKA?

Vrz!
Mika!

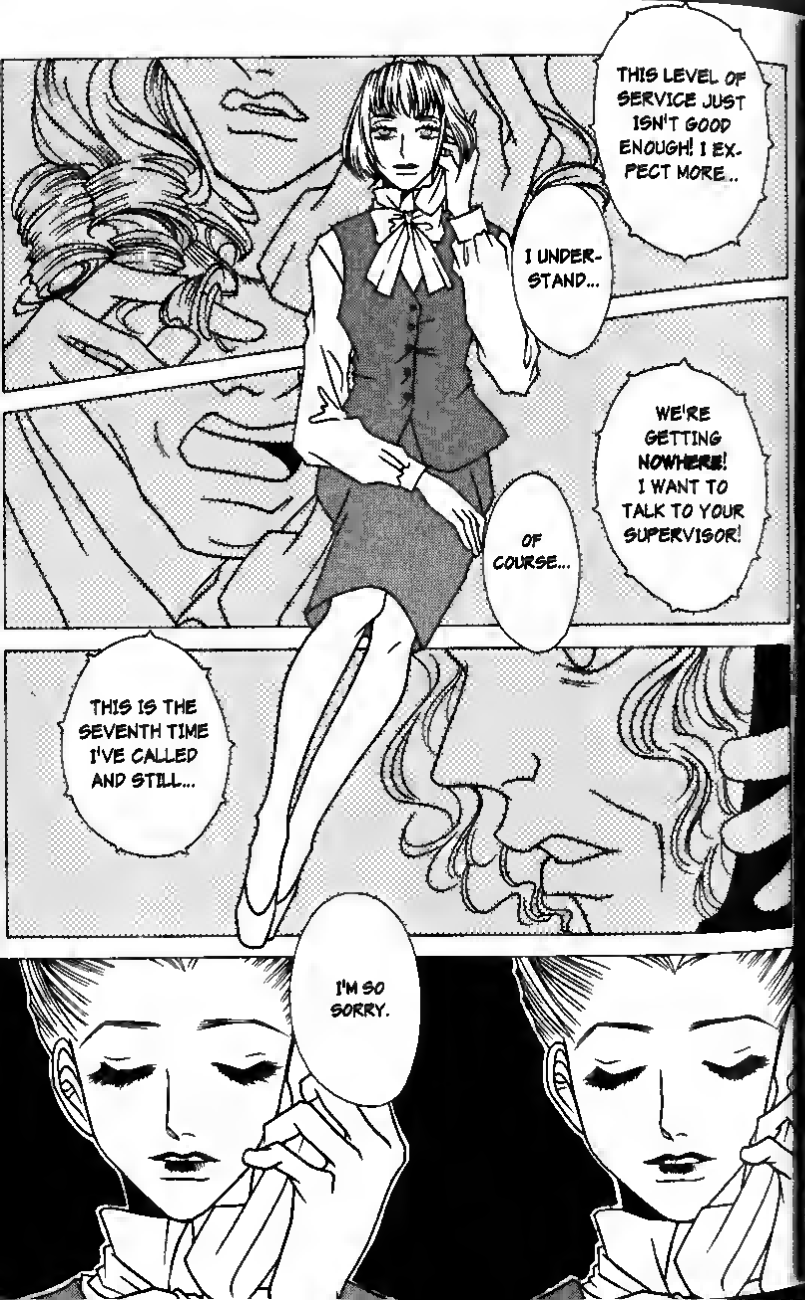
I TOLD YOU-- NOW'S NOT THE MOMENT NOT IN THIS RECESSION NOT WHILE I COULD STIL LOSE MY JOB!
I HAVE REPAYMENTS ON THE CAR, AND ANYWAY... YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE UP WORK RIGHT NOW.

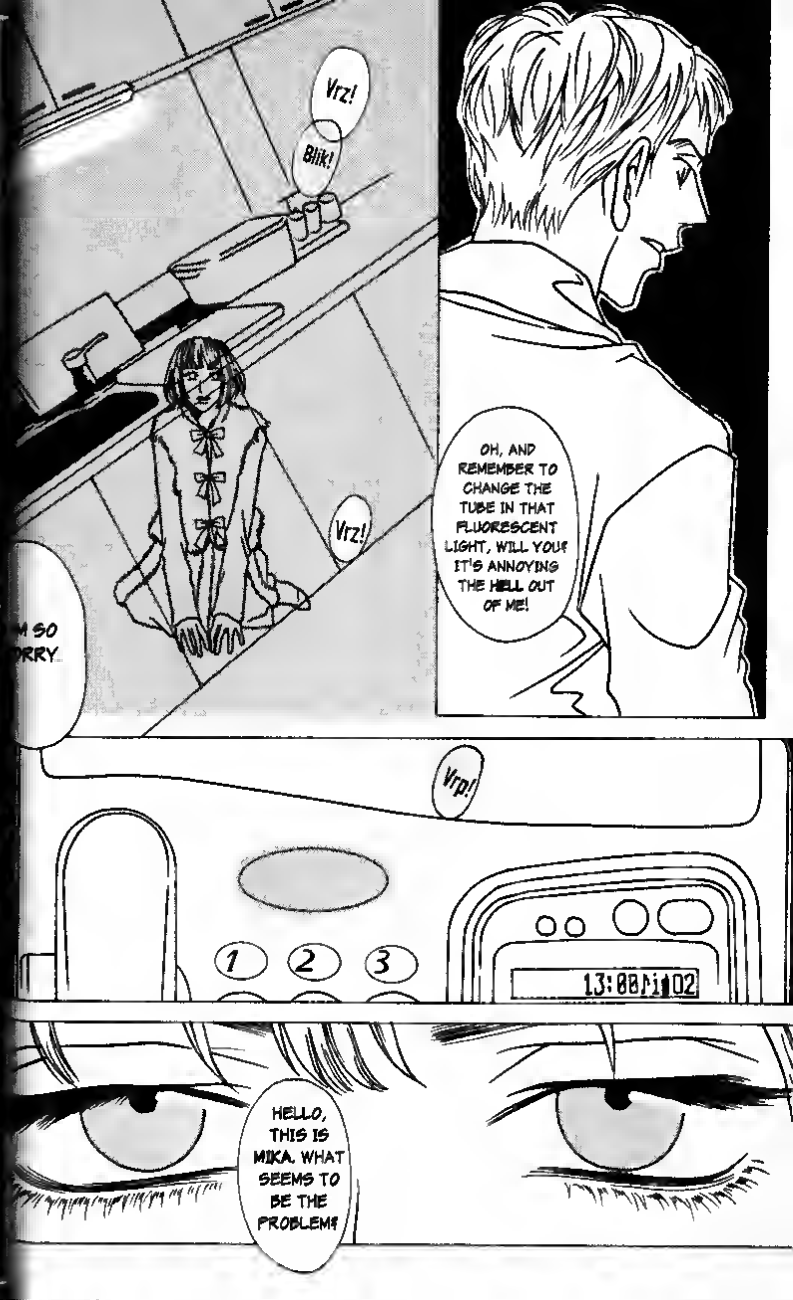
Vrz!
OF COURSE. I UNDER-STAND.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

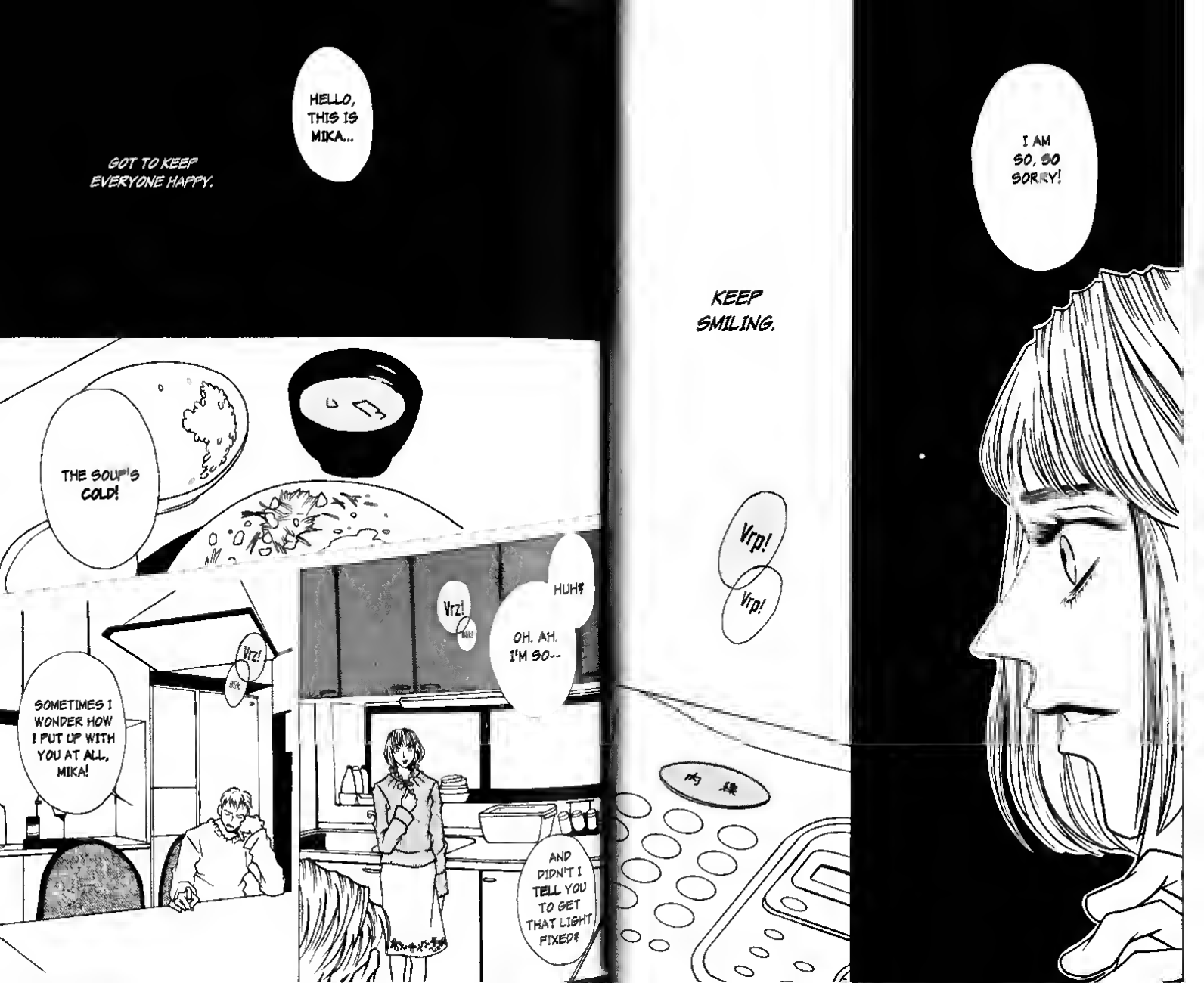
THIS POSED TO ASHIMI? I CAN STE IS ALT...

YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH ING FOR YOU, KA--I HOPED T LEAST YOU OULD COOK!

I... APOLOGIZE ER.. TOMOYUKI?
THE HOSPITAL CALLED MY MOTHER'S CONDITION IS WORSE.


THIS LEVEL OF SERVICE JUST ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH! I EXPECT MORE..
I UNDERSTAND...
WE'RE GETTING NOWHERE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOUR SUPERVISOR!
OF COURSE...
THIS IS THE SEVENTH TIME I'VE CALLED AND STILL...
I'M SO SORRY.


Vrz!
Blik!
Vrz!
OH, AND REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE TUBE IN THAT FLUORESCENT LIGHT, WILL YOU? IT'S ANNOYING THE HELL OUT OF ME!
M SO RRY.
Vrp!
1
2
3
13:08 Fri 02
HELLO, THIS IS MIKA. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM?

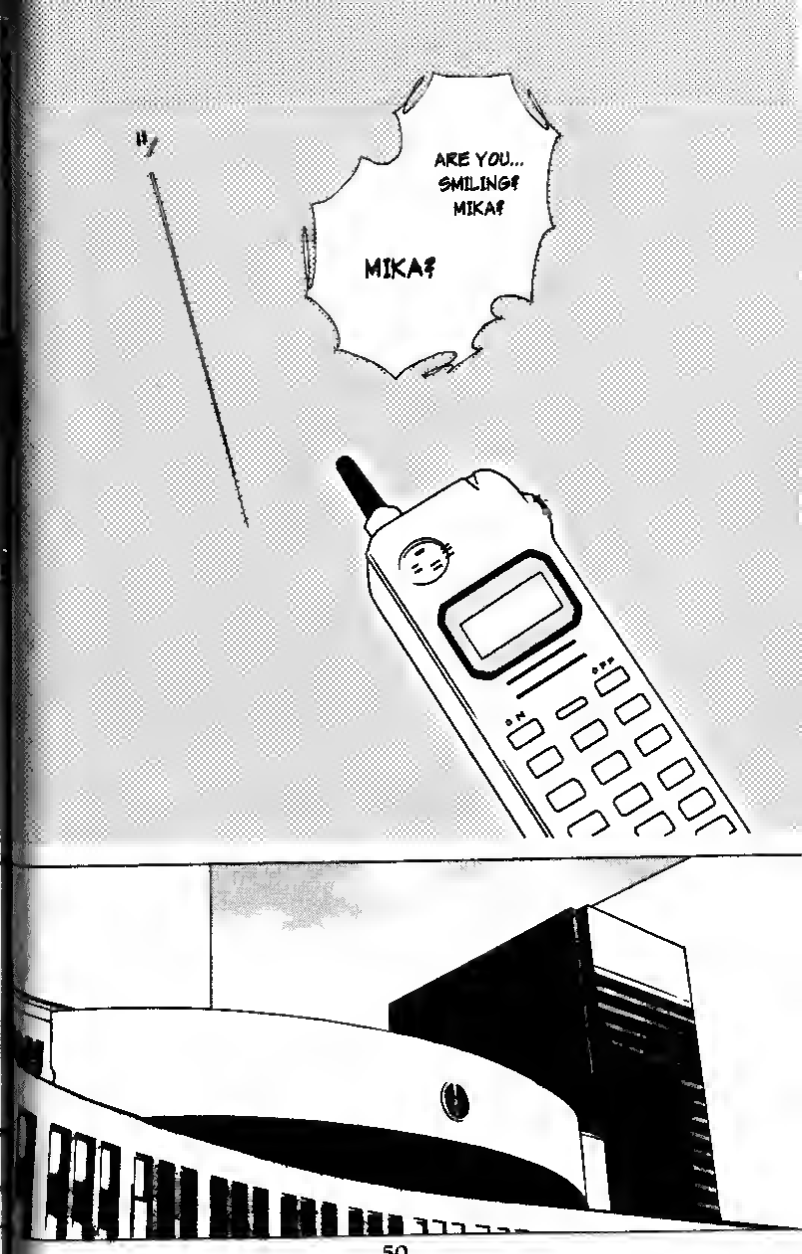

HELLO, THIS IS MIKA...
GOT TO KEEP EVERYONE HAPPY.
THE SOUP'S COLD!
Vrz!
SOMETIMES I WONDER HOW I PUT UP WITH YOU AT ALL, MIKA!
Vrz!
HUH?
OH. AH. I'M SO--
AND DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO GET THAT LIGHT FIXED?
KEEP SMILING.
Vrp!
Vrp!
I AM SO, SO SORRY!

SUH-SORRY!
THERE YOU GO AGAIN, ALWAYS APOLOGIZING! SORRY, I'M SORRY, SORRY...IT GETS ON MY NERVES!
Vrz!
Blik!
Vrz!
HEY! ANSWER THE PHONE, WILL YOU!
Vrz!
Vrz!
YES.
I'M SO SORRY.
MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST SPLIT UP...

HOW ABOUT THAT? IT FINALLY BLEW
CHOKE
MY... MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY.
OH.
SORRY.

YES, OF COURSE
I UNDER-STAND.
Vrz!
Blik!
Vrz!
I SEE.
Vr-
Blik!
Vrz!
LOOK, DON'T BOTHER COMING AROUND TOMORROW. I'LL FIX MY OWN SUPPER...

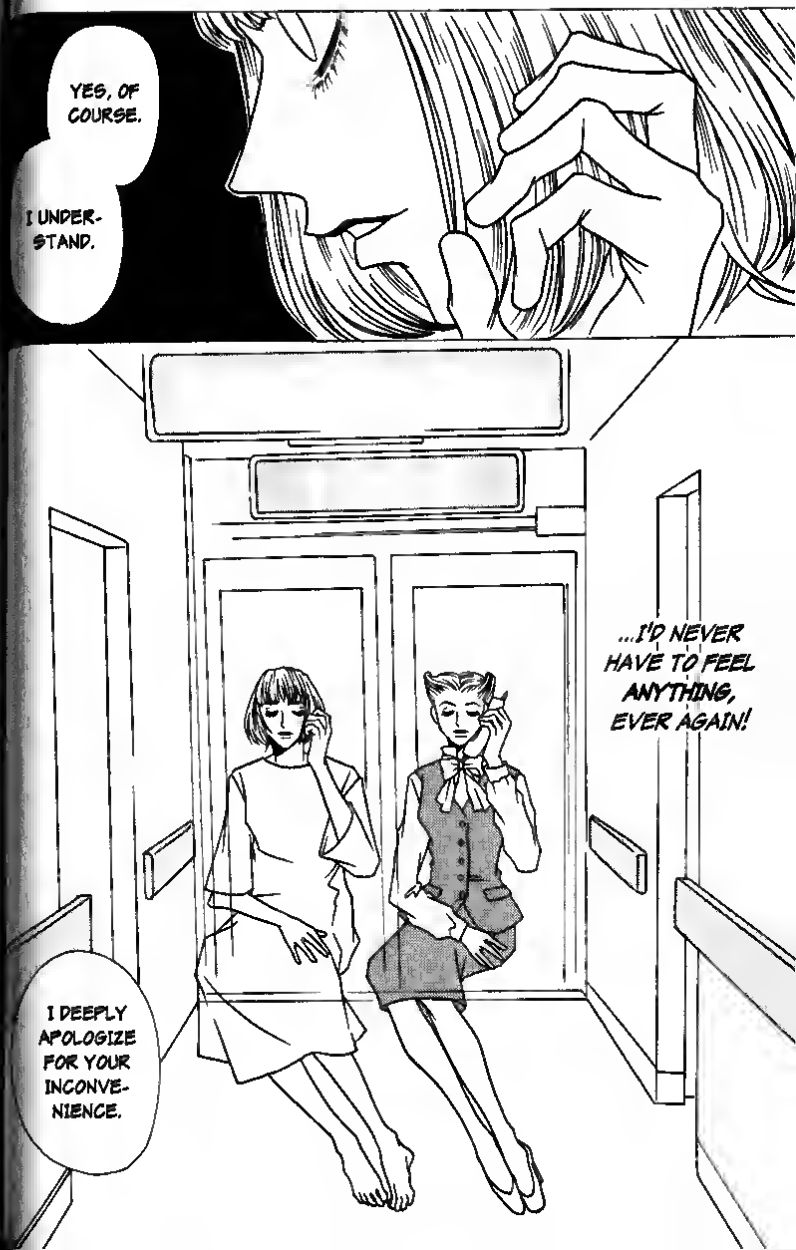
DID YOU HEAR? MS KOBAYAMA WAS ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL LAST NIGHT
SHE HAD A BREAKDOWN.
I'M NOT SURPRISED, WORKING IN THAT DEPARTMENT!
WHAT? SUDDENLY SHE'S NO USE TO THE COMPANY, IS THAT IT? ALL THOSE YEARS OF SERVICE ..AND THIS IS ALL THE THANKS SHE GETS?
SHE'S BEEN FIRED?!
IT'S OUT OF MY HANDS THEY'RE ALREADY LOOKING FOR MS KOBAYAMA'S REPLACEMENT.
THAT'S COLD!


ARE YOU... SMILING? MIKA?
MIKA?

HELLO, THIS IS MIKA.
WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM?
IF I WERE A DOLL...
AFTER ALL, WHO'D WANT A DOLL...
...WHEN THEY CAN HAVE A REAL HUMAN BEING?

IT'S BUSINESS.
WE HAVE TO HAVE A HUMAN IN CUSTOMER SERVICES. THE DOLLS ARE SMART AND EFFICIENT, BUT THEY HAVE... ER...LIMITS!
AT THE END OF THE DAY, OUR CUSTOMERS DEMAND SOMEONE FLESH AND BLOOD, A REAL VOICE AT THE END OF THE PHONE.
MS. KOBAYAMA WAS VERY GOOD AT HER JOB, VERY DEDICATED, AND I SYMPATHIZE...
...BUT I'M SURE SHE'D UNDERSTAND.

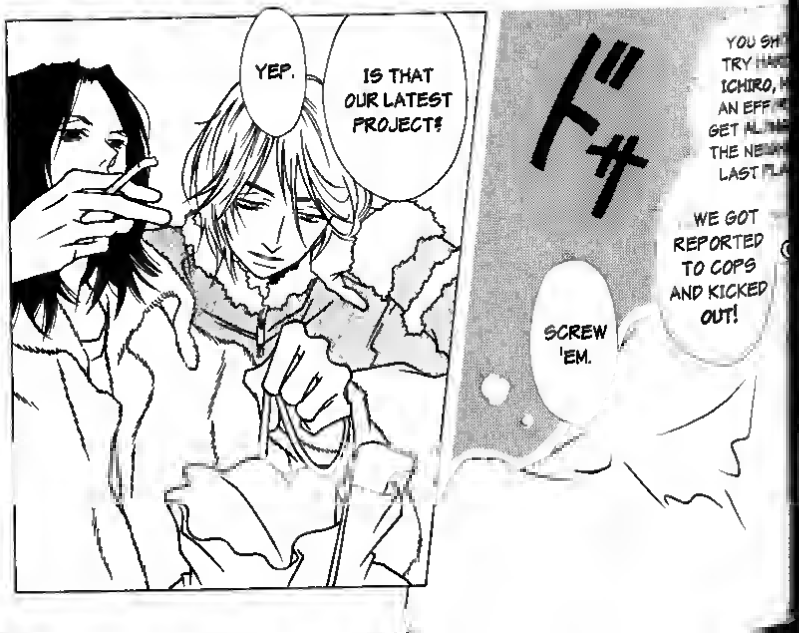
LIST 9

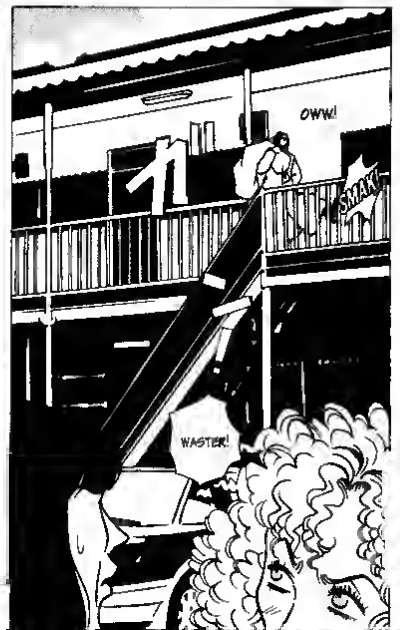

YES, OF COURSE.
I UNDER-STAND.
...I'D NEVER HAVE TO FEEL ANYTHING, EVER AGAIN!
I DEEPLY APOLOGIZE FOR YOUR INCONVE-NIENCE.

KLIK!
Y'KNOW...
...WITH THAT SACK, YOU LOOK JUST LIKE SANTA CLAUS!

9. MOTHER

ALWAYS FETCHING THIS OR CARRYING THAT!
THERE HE GOES AGAIN IN AND OUT OF THAT APARTMENT ALL DAY.

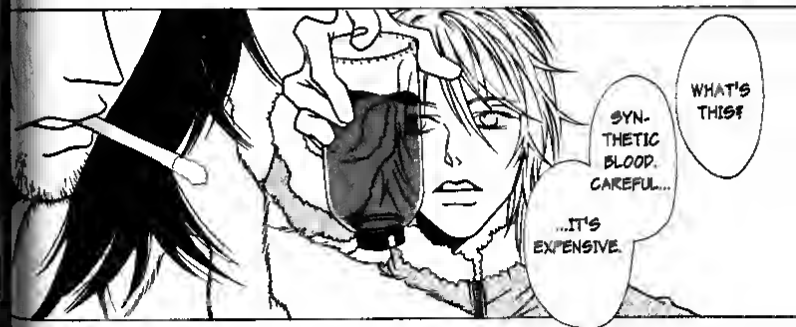

YEP.
IS THAT OUR LATEST PROJECT?
ドサ
WE GOT REPORTED TO COPS AND KICKED OUT!
SCREW 'EM.


OWW!
WASTE!

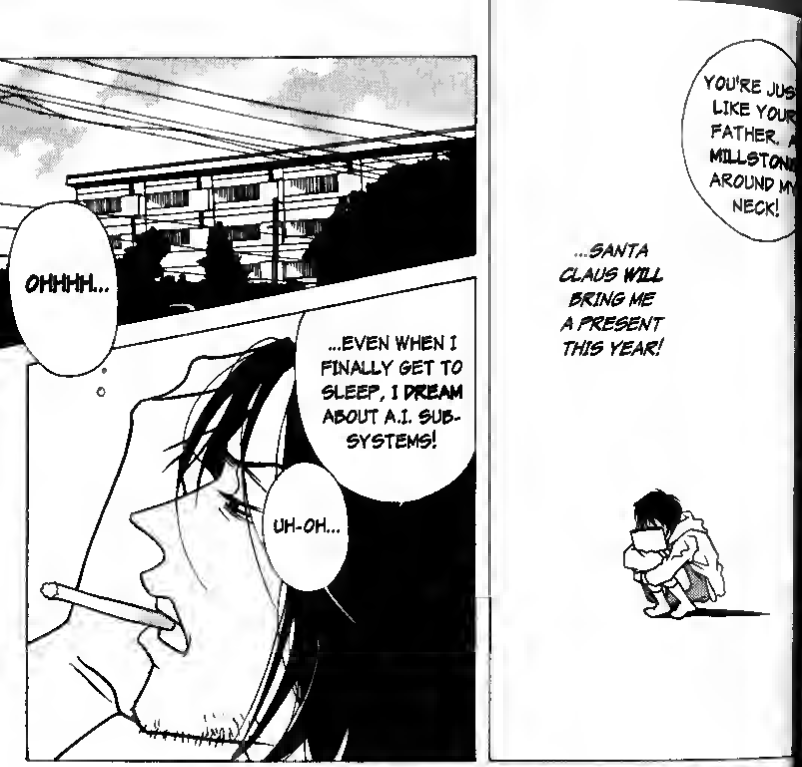
RIGHT.
THANKS
YOU, SWE
HEART, W
CAN AFFO
A FEW O
LIFE'S LIT
LUXURIE
WHY NOT, DAMMIT?
AREN'T I GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU NOW?

ガチャ
ASSHOLE!

SURE BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, WE DO NEED TO BE CAREFUL.
WE GET CAUGHT DOING THESE ILLEGAL REMODELLING JOBS, THEY'LL LOCK US UP FOR SURE.
GUY I KNOW WANTS HER AS HUMAN AS POSSIBLE
CAN YOU DO IT?


WHAT'S THIS?
SYN-THETIC BLOOD. CAREFUL...
...IT'S EXPENSIVE.

IT'S WORTH THE RISK. THOUGH. ISN'T IT? NO SHORTAGE OF PEOPLE WANTING A CHEAP UPGRADE FOR THEIR DOLL

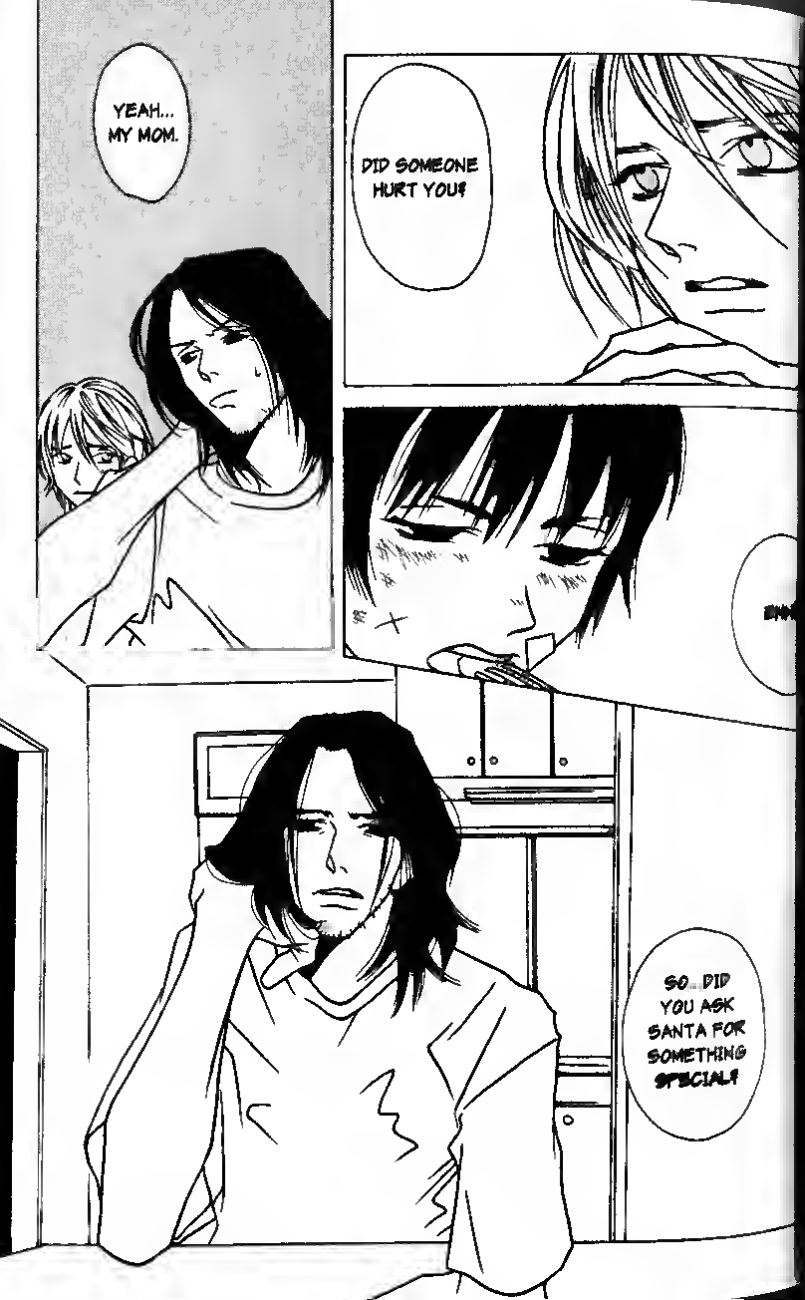

OHHHH...
...EVEN WHEN I FINALLY GET TO SLEEP, I DREAM ABOUT A.I. SUB-SYSTEMS!
UH-OH...
YOU'RE JUS LIKE YOUR FATHER, A MILLSTONE AROUND MY NECK!
...SANTA CLAUS WILL BRING ME A PRESENT THIS YEAR!

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOW
NO MAN'LL STAY AROUND ME FOR LONG WITH YOU IN TOW!
THIS IS ALL YOUR GODDAMN FAULT!
I'LL JUST KEEP BEING USED.. AND THEN DUMPED!

THE LAST "SANTA" TO COME DOWN OUR CHIMNEY LEFT ME WITH A PILE OF DEBTS AND NO PLACE TO GO BUT HERE!
WHAT ARE YOU READING, ANYWAY? AH!
SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN!

I INVITED HIM! NOW SIDDOWN AND BE SOCIABLE!
SOMEONE GOT UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED THIS MORNING!
HEY! WHAT'S THAT BRAT DOING HERE .. EATING MY BREAKFAST?

OH, YEAH... AND YOU!
IF I'M JUST GOOD...


YEAH... MY MOM.
DID SOMEONE HURT YOU?
SO... DID YOU ASK SANTA FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL?

SANTA CLAUS? C'MON, KID, HOW OLD ARE Y--AIEE!
Pinch!
DO YOU THINK THERE'S A SANTA CLAUS?
HUH?
SAYS IT JUST DAD, SSED UP, BUT I T THINK SO. K HE'S REAL, IF I'M GOOD... L COME VISIT E AGAIN!
SO I KEEP QUIET, EVEN WHEN I REALLY WANT TO CRY...

I'M TRYING TO BE GOOD. BUT YOU'D BETTER HURRY...
HMMM--
--AAHH!
AH.
AHHH

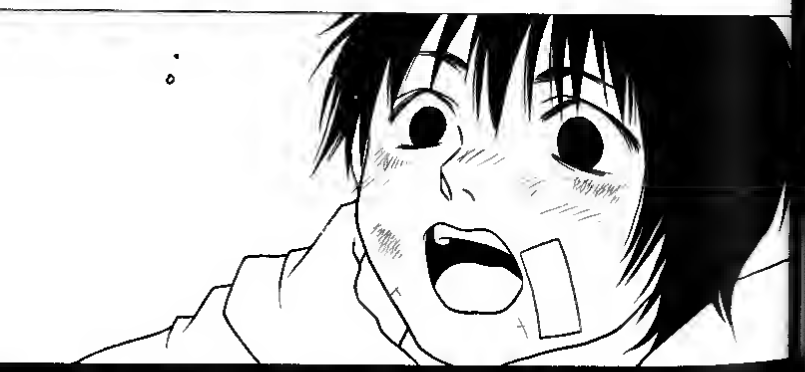
IT'S.. A SECRET.
DON'T YOU HAVE A KID UP THERE OR SOMETHING?
YOU SURE IT'S OKAY? TO USE YOUR PLACE?

ICHIRO... WHAT IS IT?
COPS!
WHAT? NO! ARE YOU SURE?
PACK EVERY-THING! HURRY, OUT THE BACK...
THOSE NOSY BITCHES! MAN, WE'VE ONLY BEEN HERE TWO WEEKS!
OPEN UP IN THERE!
Ding dong— ding— dong!
Ding dong— ding— dong!
ガン ガン ガン
THERE WAS A BODY...IN A SACK.
WE SAW IT!
MR. ICHIRO TANAKA! WE HAVE A WARRANT TO SEARCH THESE PREM-ISES!

SURE
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? ANYWAY, IT'S JUST A FEW SPARE PARTS THROWN TOGETHER. NO BIG DEAL

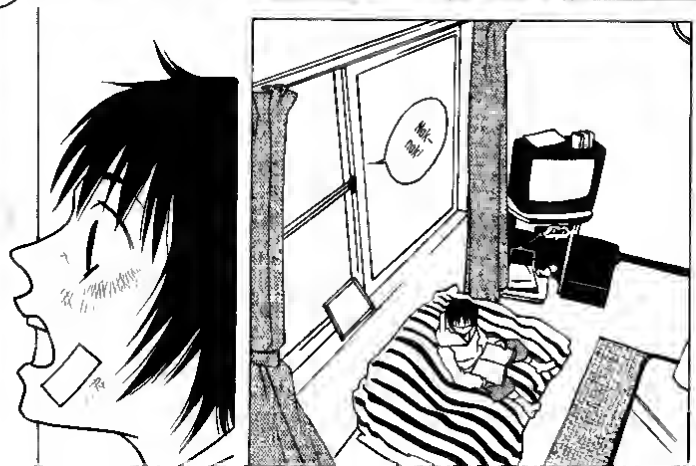
IN MY DREAMS, AT LEAST, ALL MY WISHES COME TRUE!

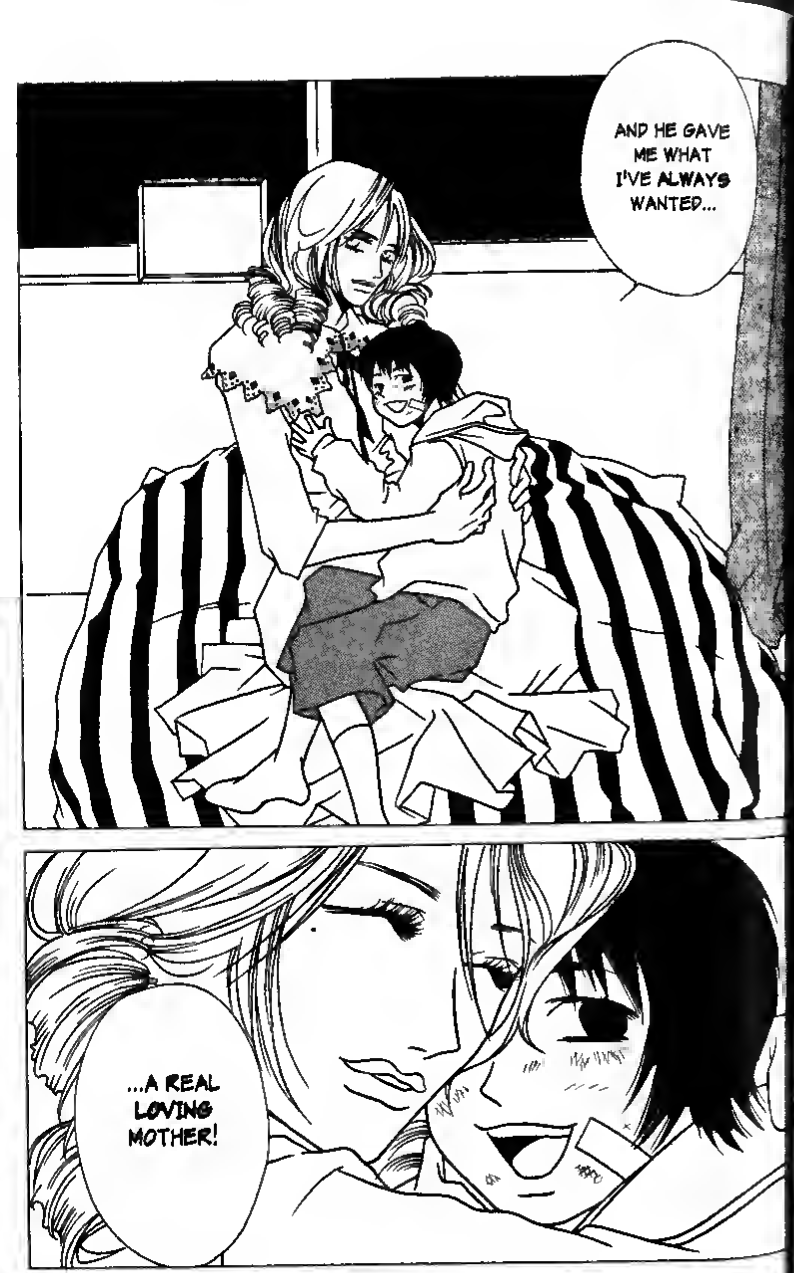
HEADS UP, KID...
...SANTA'S IN TOWN!



AIEEEEE!
STAND BACK...

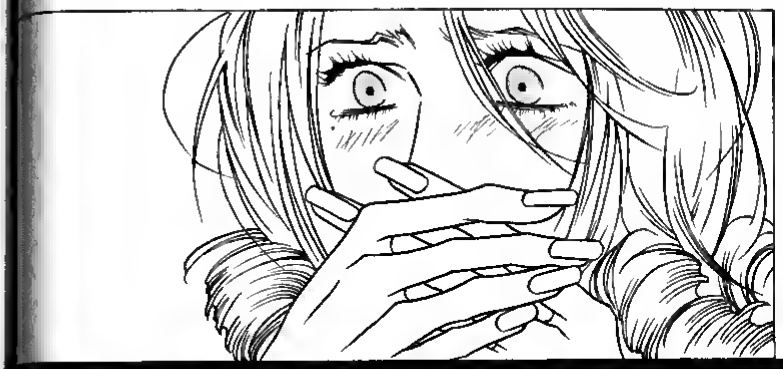
SHUT UP! IT'S JUST A SPARE ARM FROM A DOLL.
BODY, INDEED!


MMF-NN!


AND HE GAVE ME WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED...
...A REAL LOVING MOTHER!

BRRR! IT'S COLD OUT THERE.
HEY, I'M HOME! ARE YOU..
HUH?
LOOK, MOM—
...SANTA CLAUS REALLY EXISTS!
HE DIDN'T HAVE A WHITE BEARD...
BUT HIS CLOTHES WERE RED!

L I S T I0



Wha-choo!
GREAT! MY COAT'S COVERED IN SYTHETIC BLOOD, AND I'M GETTING A COLD!
OH... BAH HUMBUG!

WHEN I WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD, I TOLD MY MOTHER EXACTLY WHEN KUMI-CHAN NEXT DOOR WAS GOING TO DIE.

SEEING SOMEONE'S FUTURE--OR THEIR PAST--IS MY GIFT...AND MY CURSE.

YEAH, THESE RELIGIOUS GROUPS ARE EXEMPT FROM TAXES, AREN'T THEY?!
EXCEPT FOR THE MONEY SHE'S MAKING!
JUST LIKE SOME REGULAR KID!
OH.. SHE'S SMALLER THAN SH LOOKS O TV!
AM
MY HEAD HURTS.
MAKOTO-SAMA MAY WE HAVE YOUR HOLY WORDS...
I, I WAS WONDERING IF I WILL GET MARRIED BY 25 MY PARENTS...
I AM SO BORED!
SIGH.
MAKOTO-SAMA?

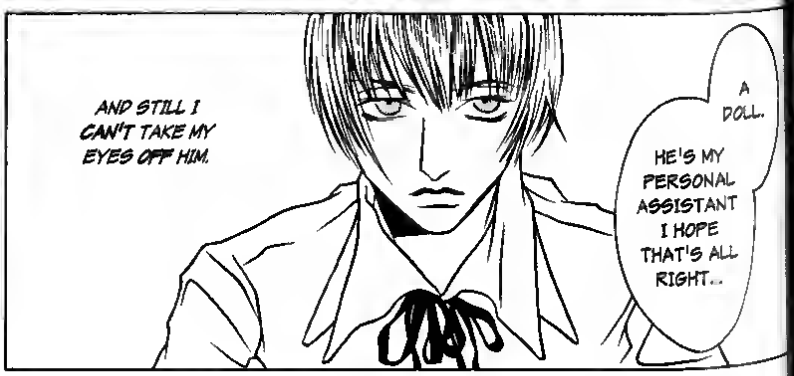
MY BODY STAYED SMALL, AS MY NEW ABILITIES GREW. AND NOW? NOW EVERYBODY WORSHIPS ME..

10_MAKOTO

HHH. VERY WELL.
MY OWN MOTHER-- BEGGING FOR MY ATTENTION LIKE A CLIENT!
NO? WELL THEN CAN WE PLEASE GE A MOVE ON.
YOU HAVE A CLIENT WAITING...
LET THEM WAIT I DON'T FEEL LIKE SEEING ANY-ONE RIGHT NOW!
OH! BUT... MAKOTO, PLEASE! W DEPEND O YOU. LOOK I'LL BUY YOU A NEW DRESS...
...OR SOME LOVELY JEWELRY, ANYTHING YOU WANT, JUST SAY!

MA--
MAKOTO-SAMA?
LET'S SEE...
NO. NOT BY TWENTY-FIVE.. NOT UNLESS YOU LOSE SOME WEIGHT AND DO SOMETHING WITH THAT HAIR!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU
I'M YOUR MOTHER!
THIS ATTITUDE OF YOURS IS GETTING WORSE BY THE DAY!
PLEASE, MAKOTO... IF ANYTHING'S WORRYING YOU, YOU MUST TELL ME.

OH! THAT BOY. HE'S...


AND STILL I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.
A DOLL.
HE'S MY PERSONAL ASSISTANT I HOPE THAT'S ALL RIGHT..

MY HEAD HURTS.

TOYOKUNI FAMOUS TV SONALITY, KOTO. SHE'D KE TO ASK YOU SOME ESTIONS..
YEAH, RIGHT. SAME OLD GROVELING RUBBISH.
OH, RIGHT. JUST SOME FREE PUBLICITY FOR THE--
IT IS A TRUE HONOR.
THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME, MAKOTO-SAMA.

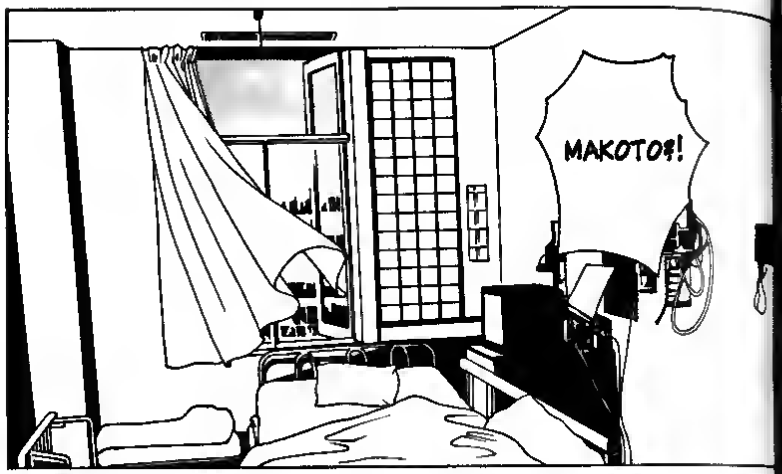
I WAS HOPING...
SO YOU SEE...
I FEEL HIS MACHINE MIND ITS RHYTHMIC PULSE IS LIKE THE TIDE, EBBING AND FLOWING.
NO EMOTIONS AT ALL.
NO THOUGHT, NO DESIRE. NO PAST OR FUTURE.

HA HA HA! OH DEAR, NOT QUITE THE SORT OF FREE PUBLICITY WE WERE AFTER. AHH HA HA--
IT'S IDLE BLESSINGS FOR CASH. A SCAM AND A LUCRATIVE ONE!
MAKOTO?
MS TOYOKUNI, YOU'VE BEEN VERY CRITICAL IN THE PRESS RECENTLY ABOUT THE MAKOTO'S [illegible]ARKLE GROUP.
YES, I HAVE
I'M DETERMINED TO EXPOSE THE GROUP'S LEADER AS A SHAM, A CHARLATAN. I MYSELF VISITED HIM THE OTHER DAY...
...AND CAME AWAY WITH NOTHING I COULDN'T HAVE FOUND OUT ON THE INTERNET OR TAKEN A WILD GUESS AT
NEVER MUH-MIND...WH-WHAT THEY SAY, WE--UHH...THAT... NOISE! IT'S SO LOUD. CAN YOU--
Dum-Dum
Dum-Dum

I LET MYSELF BE SWEPT AWAY...

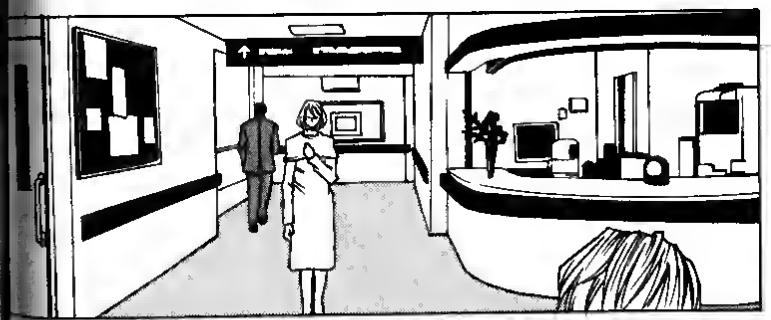
...BEFORE THE "GIFT" TOOK IT ALL AWAY.

MEMORIES PULL AT ME, LIKE SAND THROUGH MY TOES. A BLISSFUL TIME...


MAKOTO?!

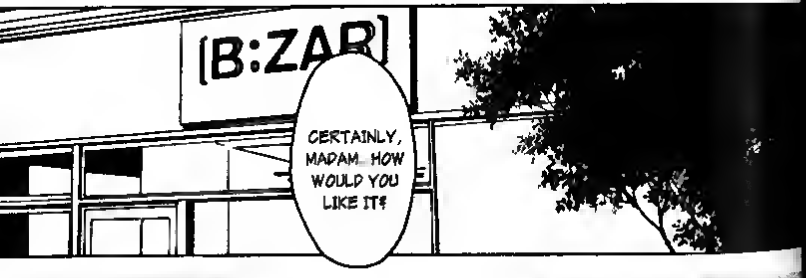
Tap-
tap

THE TUMOR IS INOPERABLE-- IT'S PRESSING AGAINST HER FRONTAL LOBE SHE . DOESN'T HAVE MUCH TIME
OH. OH GOD! PLEASE, NO..
NOT MY BABY!
...BUT I'M AFRAID THE DIAGNOSIS IS NOT GOOD.
PLEASE, NO!



MAKOTO? ARE YOU AWAKE?
MAKOTO?

I REALLY SHOULD BE WORKING..
AWW, C'MON-- PLEASE! IF I DON'T HAVE SOME FUN NOW, I..I MIGHT AS WELL KILL MYSELF!
AND DOLLS ARE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT HUMAN LIFE ABOVE ALL ELSE, RIGHT? RIGHT?


[B:ZAR]
CERTAINLY, MADAM. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE IT?

OH, WOW! I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO HAVE SHORT HAIR! KNOW WHAT THEY TOLD ME?

LLO. AN I E IN?

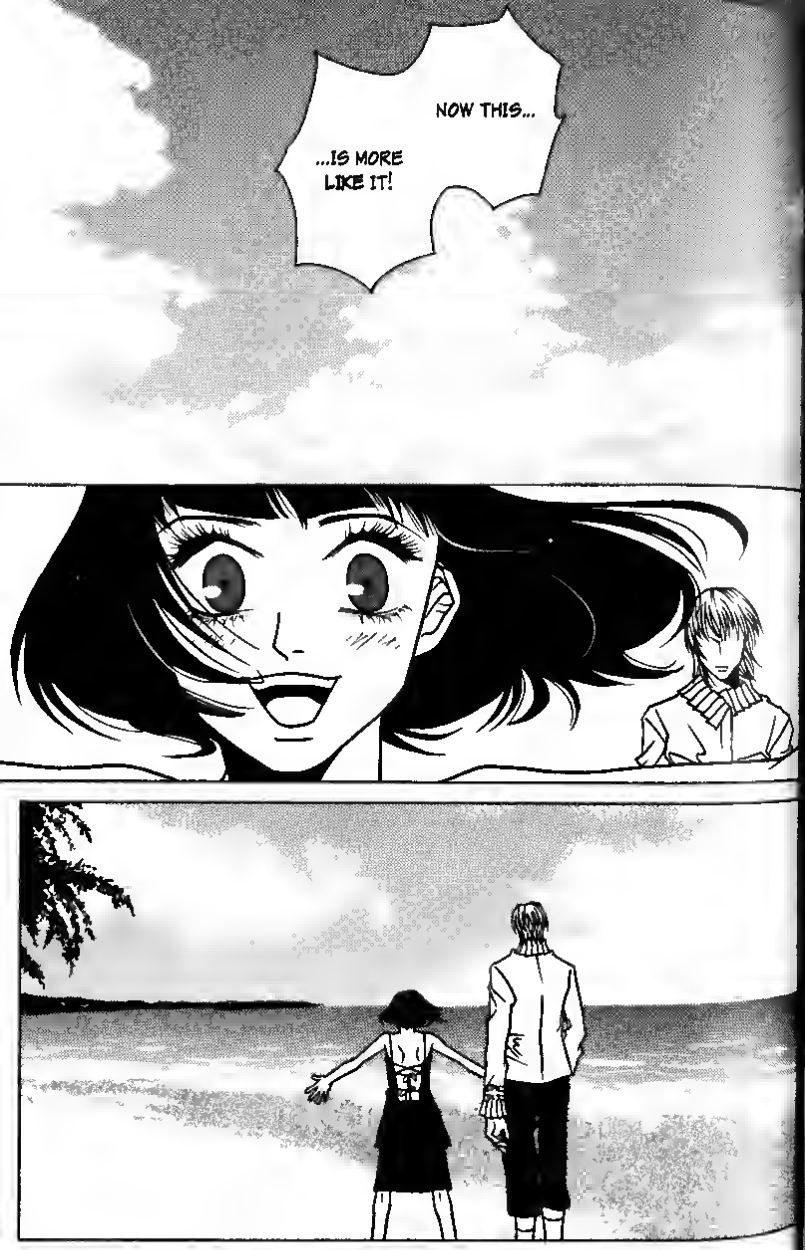
OH! HELLO..

IF YOU MEAN MS. TOYOKUNI, THEN NO. SHE'S OUT FILMING.
THAT BITCH-MISTRESS OF YOURS IS NOT AROUND, IS SHE?

HOW ABOUT SPENDING SOME TIME WITH ME?
GOOD! PERFECT!

FINE.
PUT IT ALL ON THE CARD..
I'LL WEAR THIS OUT! JUST THROW THE OLD CLOTHES AWAY, WILL YOU?
THAT'LL BE . $0,345, PLUS TAX.
DID YOU SEE HER FACE? AH HA HA HA!
HER EYES LOOKED THEY LIKE WERE GOING TO POP OUT OF HER HEAD!
.....

CLOTHES NEXT, THEN SHOES! C'MON...
YOU HAVE NO CLUE, DO YOU? BUT THAT'S FINE.
YES.
DOES IT LOOK NICE?
THAT IF I HAD MY HAIR CUT, I'D LOSE MY HOLY POWER
I LIKE THIS, AND THAT, AND THOSE...
AND THAT BAG, AND...


NOW THIS...
...IS MORE LIKE IT!

ISN'T THAT THE GIRL FROM THE TELEVISION? THE ONE ON THE NEWS?
YES! SOMETHING TO DO WITH A RELIGIOUS CULT, I'M SURE!
.....
HEY!
HONESTLY! CAN'T YOU AT LEAST PRETEND TO EAT YOUR ICE CREAM? YOU'RE HOPELESS!

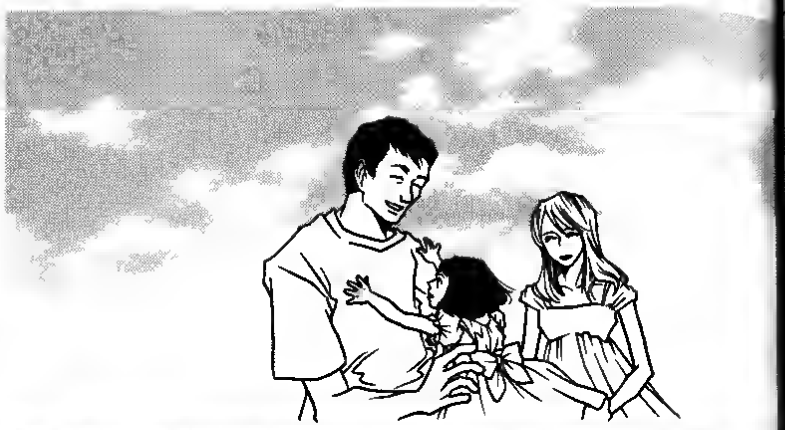
IT'S TOO NOISY HERE. TOO MANY PEOPLE
C'MON, I KNOW WHERE I WANT TO GO...
GROUP

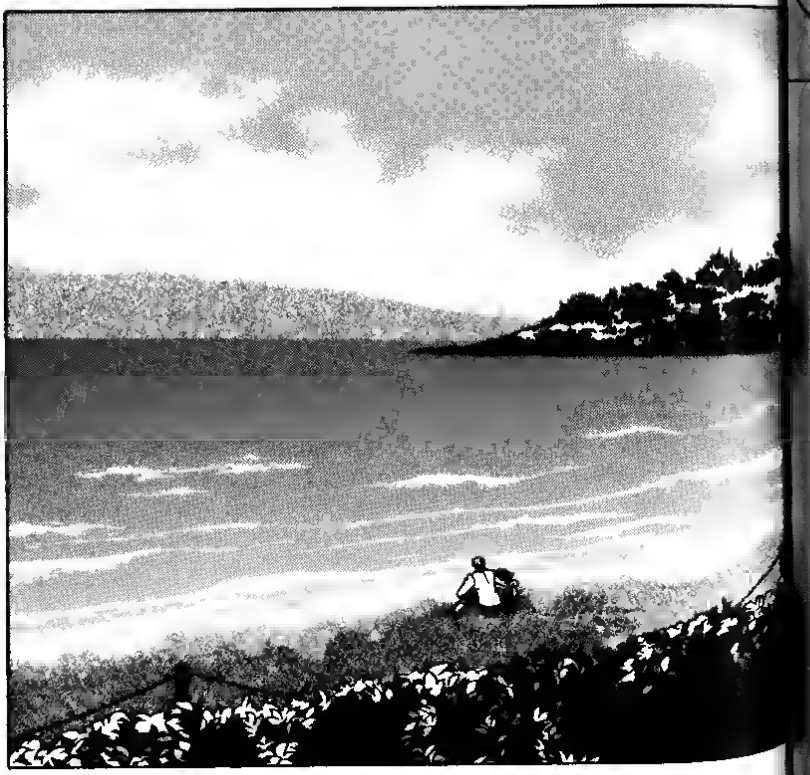
AHHH...

I HAVE A TUMOR IN MY BRAIN. I'VE KNOWN FOR YEARS.
MY GIFT, MY CURSE I SAW THIS DAY COMING A LONG TIME AGO. I'M NOT SCARED, I JUST...
...WISH IT COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT.
HOW I'D LOVE TO BE AN ORDINARY 29-YEAR-OLD-- GOING OUT WITH FRIENDS, FALLING IN LOVE... EVEN JUST WEARING ADULT CLOTHES.
I'LL NEVER KNOW ANY OF THOSE SIMPLE PLEASURES!

I ALWAYS LOVED THE OCEAN.
MY PARENTS BROUGHT ME HERE AT LOT WHEN I WAS YOUNG!
THIS WAS BEFORE THE DIVORCE, BEFORE MY POWERS EMERGED.
. WE'D JUST WALK AND WALK. EVERY FEW MINUTES I'D STOP, SCOOP UP A HANDFUL OF WATER
...AND WATCH THE NOCTILUCAS SPARKLE AS THEY SPILLED THROUGH MY FINGERS.
I WAS HAPPY THEN.
AND SOON I'LL BE DEAD.

I'VE HEARD MY MASTER SAY THAT LIFE IS A SERIES OF BETRAYALS, SOME GOOD, SOME BAD.
PERHAPS YOUR OWN GIFT WILL STILL BETRAY YOU...
FLAT, EMOTIONLESS WORDS FROM A SYNTHETIC MIND...
BUT, HEY, NO GOOD FEELING SORRY FOR MYSELF.
IT'S NOT AS IF THIS IS A BIG SHOCK OR ANYTHING. I'M READY...
HA!
I CAN'T EVEN LIE TO MYSELF!
I'M SCARED. I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

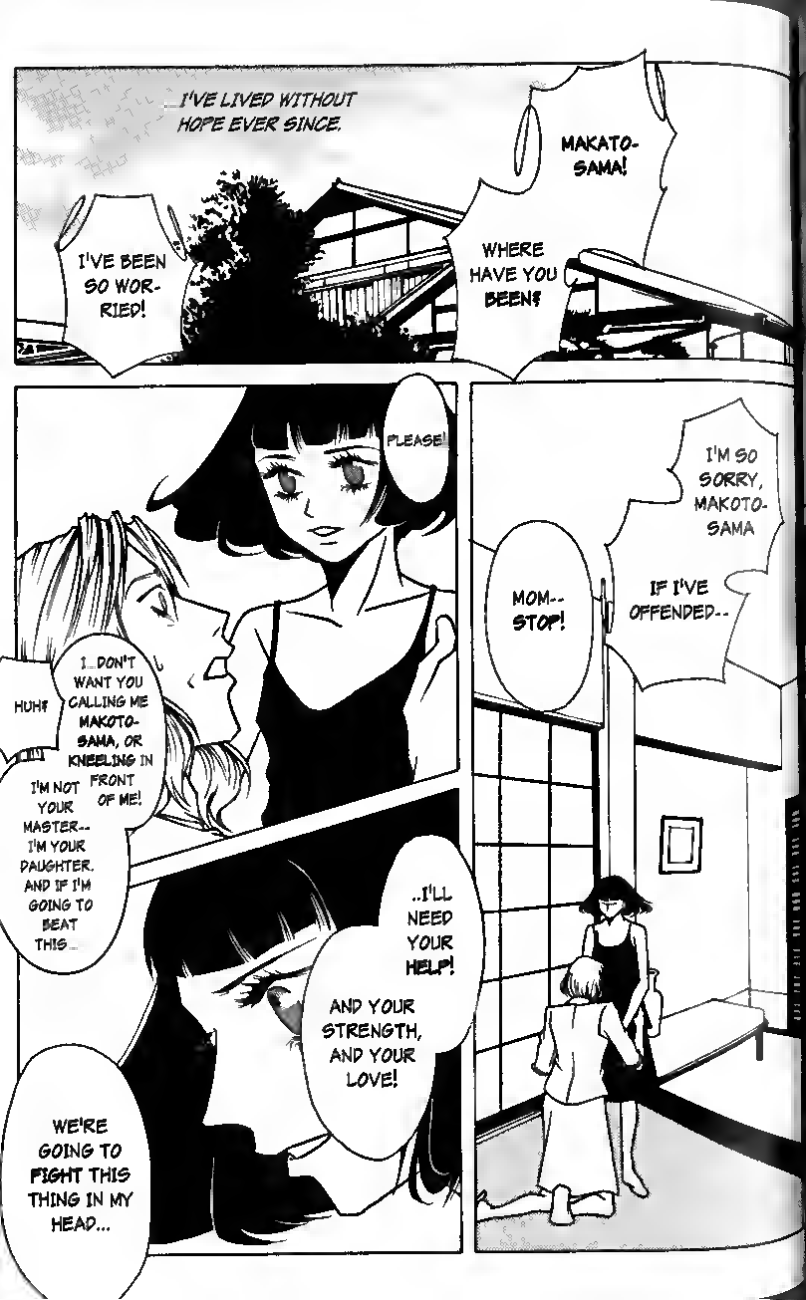




I CLING TO THEM AS
IF I WERE DROWNING.

THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY. THE SCAN WILL BE NEGATIVE... YOU DON'T HAVE CANCER
BUT--
THAT RUBY NECKLACE, THE ONE HIDDEN BEHIND YOUR DRESSER...
...IT'S A PRESENT FROM YOUR BOYFRIEND. BUT...HE'S MARRIED.
--HOW COULD YOU HAVE KNOWN?

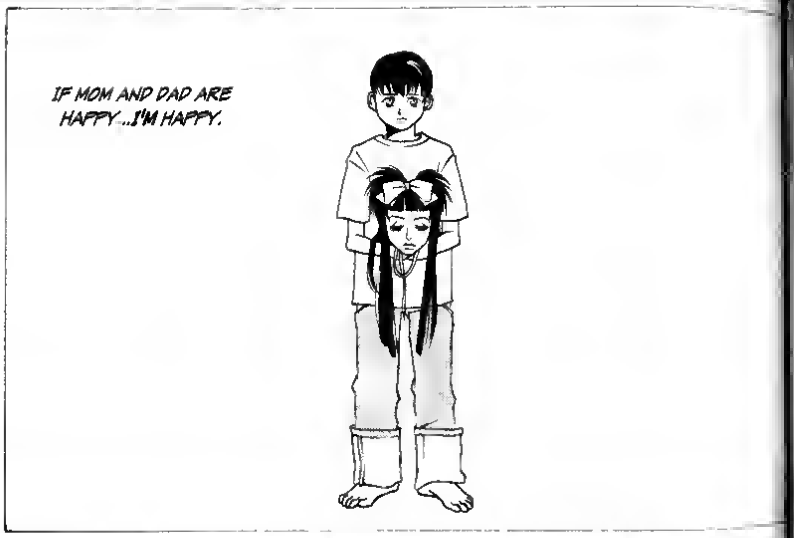
OH!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? I TOLD YOU--
LOOK IF THIS IS ABOUT WHAT I SAID ON TV...
...TAKE IT UP WITH ME, NOT MY--
WHAT?

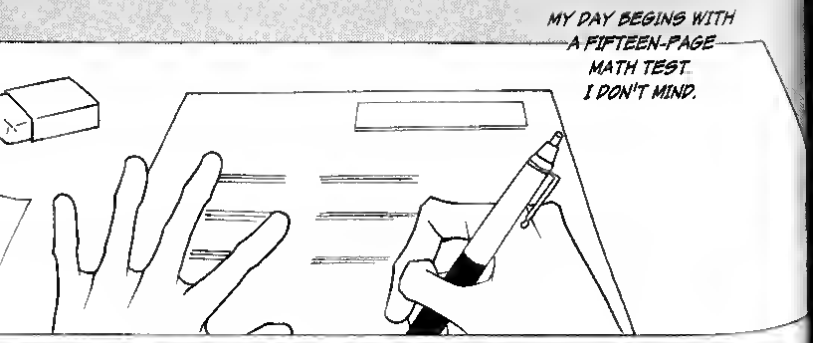

...I'VE LIVED WITHOUT HOPE EVER SINCE.
MAKOTO-SAMA!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
I'VE BEEN SO WORRIED!
PLEASE!
I'M SO SORRY, MAKOTO-SAMA
IF I'VE OFFENDED--
MOM--STOP!
HUH?
I...DON'T WANT YOU CALLING ME MAKOTO-SAMA, OR KNEELING IN FRONT OF ME!
I'M NOT YOUR MASTER--I'M YOUR DAUGHTER. AND IF I'M GOING TO BEAT THIS...
..I'LL NEED YOUR HELP!
AND YOUR STRENGTH, AND YOUR LOVE!
WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT THIS THING IN MY HEAD...

I PRAY THAT YOU'RE RIGHT...
...THAT MY POWER REALLY IS A SHAM!
GOODBYE, MY FRIEND.
MAYBE WE'LL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN!
I WAS TEN WHEN I PREDICTED MY OWN DEATH...

L I S T I I

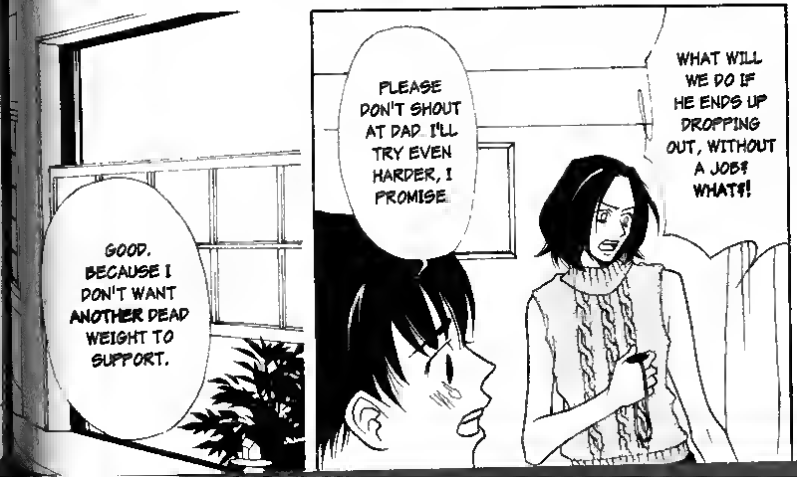
TODAY IS THE FIRST
DAY OF THE REST OF
MY LIFE..


IF MOM AND DAD ARE HAPPY...I'M HAPPY.


MY DAY BEGINS WITH A FIFTEEN-PAGE MATH TEST. I DON'T MIND.

IT'S BAD ENOUGH YOUR FATHER AMOUNTED TO NOTHING--
--I WON'T LET THE SAME THING HAPPEN TO YOU! OKAY?
SURE.

I TRY HARD NOT TO CRY. IT JUST MAKES THINGS WORSE.
MOM'S SCARY IN THE MORNINGS.
OH, SURE! GO EASY-- THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOUR PROBLEM!
GO EASY ON CHIYUKI, DEAR HE'S ONLY SEVEN!
HARU-KUN'S MOTHER WAS TELLING ME HE'S DOING TWENTY-PAGE TESTS EVERY MORNING-- ADVANCED LEVEL!
DO YOU WANT TO GET LEFT BEHIND?


GOOD. BECAUSE I DON'T WANT ANOTHER DEAD WEIGHT TO SUPPORT.
PLEASE DON'T SHOUT AT DAD. I'LL TRY EVEN HARDER, I PROMISE.
WHAT WILL WE DO IF HE ENDS UP DROPPING OUT, WITHOUT A JOB? WHAT?!

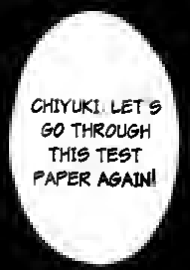
IT'S JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH! TRY HARDER!
SATURDAYS ARE ALWAYS BAD. I DON'T KNOW WHY.
MOM WAS IN A REALLY BAD MOOD TODAY!
SO I TALK TO MY DOLL.
HELLO.
I CAN'T TALK TO MOM OR DAD
.....
IT DOESN'T MEAN THEY DON'T LOVE YOU. IT'S JUST...
.HOW GROWN-UPS ARE SOME-TIMES.
HELLO. YOUR EYES ARE RED. HAVE YOU BEEN CRYING AGAIN?
YES.
MOM AND DAD HAD ANOTHER FIGHT!
万泉会館
HEY!
I SAW HER...
THAT SAME DAY. IT HAPPENED.
5375

AND SUDDENLY I THOUGHT I KNEW...WHY MOM WAS SO ANGRY.

PERFUME
SOMEONE ELSE'S PERFUME..

I CAN'T SLEEP.
PLEASE, PLEASE TELL ME...
...HOW I CAN MAKE THEM GET ALONG!

HE CAN'T EVEN MANAGE TO HIDE THIS FROM ME.
SOME DAYS IT'S LIPSTICK.


CHIYUKI, LET'S GO THROUGH THIS TEST PAPER AGAIN!

ALL I WANT IS FOR MY SON TO BE A SUCCESS...

I KNOW. BUT NOW MY HUSBAND'S A SENIOR PARTNER, IT'S ALMOST EXPECTED OF US.
THEY'RE SO EXPENSIVE!
HEY, YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A DOLL! THINGS MUST BE GOING WELL FOR YOU TWO
YEAH, RIGHT! IT'S NOT LIKE YOU WANTED TO SHOW OFF OR ANYTHING!

SOME PEOPLE SAY IT'S WRONG TO PUSH TOO HARD, TOO YOUNG...
Tick
Tock

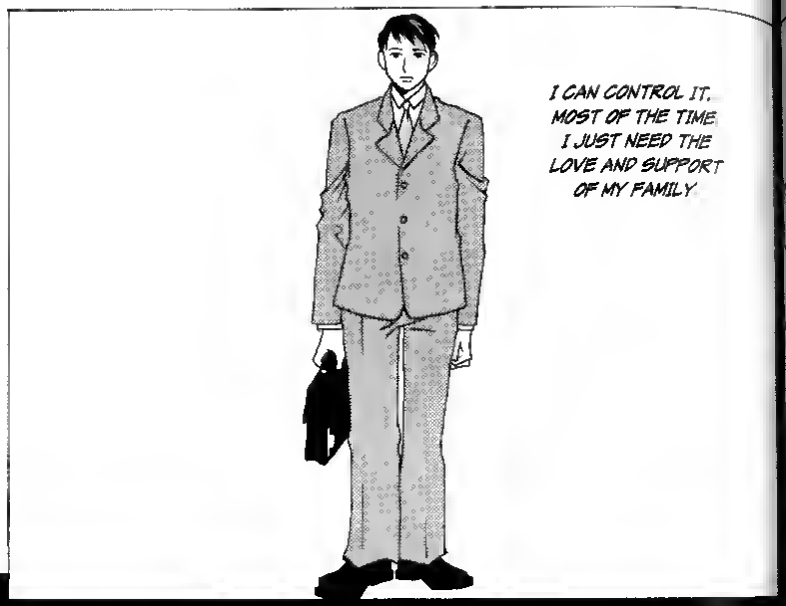
NO! NO, NO, NO! HOW MANY TIMES?
READ THE QUESTION MORE CAREFULLY!

I TELL THEM TO MIND THEIR OWN BUSINESS!
Tick
DO THE WHOLE TEST AGAIN! FASTER THIS TIME...

WELL... YES
BUT HE'S NOT REALLY UP TO CHIYUKI-KUN'S LEVEL.
DOESN'T HARU-KUN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS CHIYUKI?
I UNDERSTAND YOUR CHIYUKI-KUN IS DOING VERY WELL AT CRAM SCHOOL RANKED SECOND IN HIS CLASS, OR SO I HEARD
OH, I SEE. YES...
RIGHT NOW, THE PROMOTION IS ACTUALLY COSTING US MONEY HE NEEDS EXPENSIVE SUITS, A CALFSKIN BRIEFCASE
ARROGANT BITCH!
LIAR! HE'S HIGHER, AND YOU KNOW IT!
BUT NOT FOR LONG.
PERHAPS I SHOULD SEND MY SON TO CRAM SCHOOL. HIS LAST MATH REPORT WASN'T GOOD.
MM.
HE MUST BE VERY CLEVER. AHEAD OF HIS YEARS...

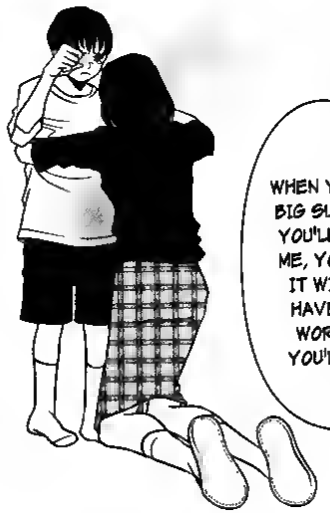
HEH.
PERHAPS
DON'T WORK TOO HARD NOW...
WHAT KIND OF FOOL DOES HE TAKE ME FOR?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HUH?
N-NOTHING. JUST, GETTING MY STUFF TOGETHER I HAVE TO GO IN TO WORK TODAY
AGAIN? THAT'S THE FOURTH SATURDAY RUNNING! I HOPE YOU AT LEAST GET A PROMOTION FOR ALL THIS EXTRA WORK!

HA HA! AH HA HA! HHHH...
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO LAUGH OR CRY!
STRANGE...
...I'M MISSING A LIPSTICK.
WHAT A CHEAP, TAWDRY... AMATEUR AFFAIR. HOW TYPICAL OF HIM!
HE'S GIVING MY OLD MAKE-UP TO HIS SATURDAY SLUT!
NOT CHIYUKI. HIM!
SEIKO



IT ALL STARTED WITH A LIPSTICK.

MY SON... IS ALL I HAVE LEFT.


I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU. YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, DON'T YOU?
WHEN YOU'RE A BIG SUCCESS, YOU'LL THANK ME, YOU WILL! IT WILL ALL HAVE BEEN WORTH IT, YOU'LL SEE.

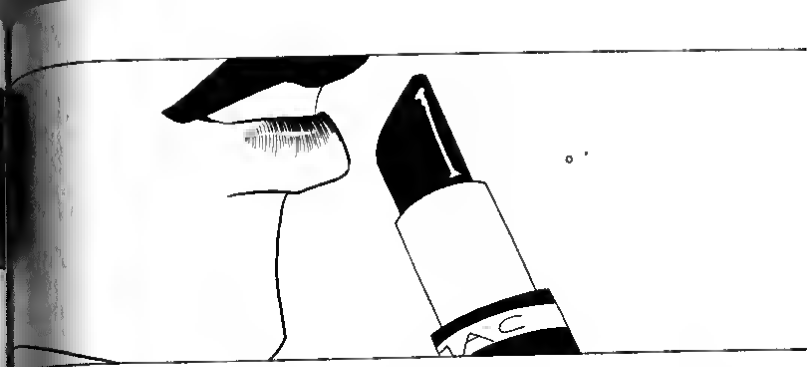
HIS HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMS AREN'T FOR ANOTHER THREE YEARS!
SO? THE SOONER HE STARTS STUDYING, THE BETTER. WE CAN'T ALL BE MEASURED BY YOUR LOW STANDARDS!
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, OUR NEIGHBOR HAS A DOLL..
WHILE WE'RE BARELY MAKING THE PAYMENTS ON OUR CAR!
I JUST NEED THE LOVE AND SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY.
I DON'T GET IT.

YOU'RE DRUNK, KIYOHARA, AND YOU'RE GIVING ME A HEADACHE!
AWW, DON'T YOU WANT TO PLAY? HOW ABOUT YOU, TSUSHIMA-SAN? EVER WANTED TO SEE HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES?
WHAT? NO DON'T--
WOW! LOOK AT YOU!
YOU COULD MAKE A LIVING DOING THAT!
A... LIVING?

AND THEN I SAW HER!
OH!
LOVELY. YOU'LL MAKE SOMEONE A WONDERFUL WIFE...
FOR YOU..
TEA?
OH. YES
MM. DELICIOUS.
THANK YOU.
HA HA HA HA. WHAT ARE YOU LIKE?
MY LIFE WAS JUST A SUCCESSION OF MUNDANE TASKS, ROUNDED OFF EACH NIGHT BY A MISERABLE HOME LIFE.

I'LL BE GONE ALL DAY. I'M TAKING CHIYUKI TO THE SCIENCE SHOW. YOU CAN GET YOUR OWN SUPPER
...AND I FELL!

JUST OUR NEIGHBOR'S NEW DOLL, BUT HER SIMPLE BEAUTY TOOK MY BREATH AWAY.
SHE'S,
...EVERY-THING MY LIFE IS NOT.
FLAWLESS. A PICTURE OF PERFECTION. MY DULL, ORDINARY WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN...



I WAS SOMEONE ELSE NOW.

SHE JUST... STOPPED TALKING.

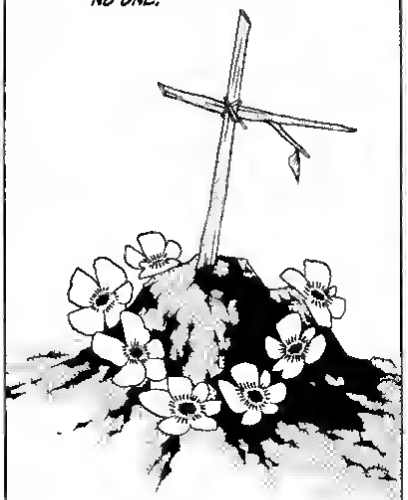
MY DOLL IS DEAD

...BUT HOW CAN I EXPLAIN THAT I JUST CAN'T STOP?! ANY MORE THAN SHE CAN STOP PUSHING CHIYUKI.

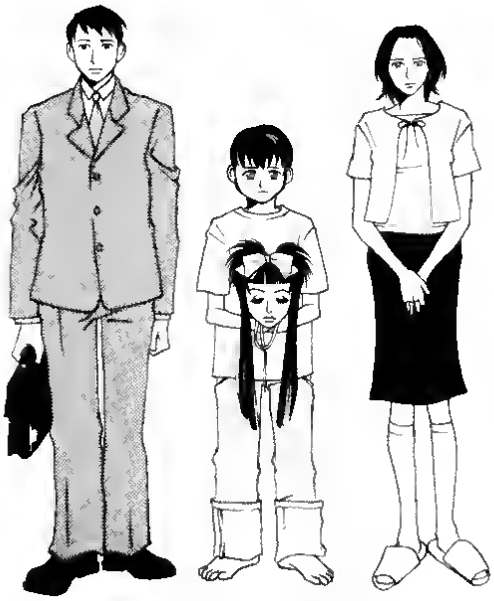
AGAIN? THAT'S THE FOURTH SATURDAY RUNNING!

MY WIFE SUSPECTS...

NOW I HAVE NO ONE!



...ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY.

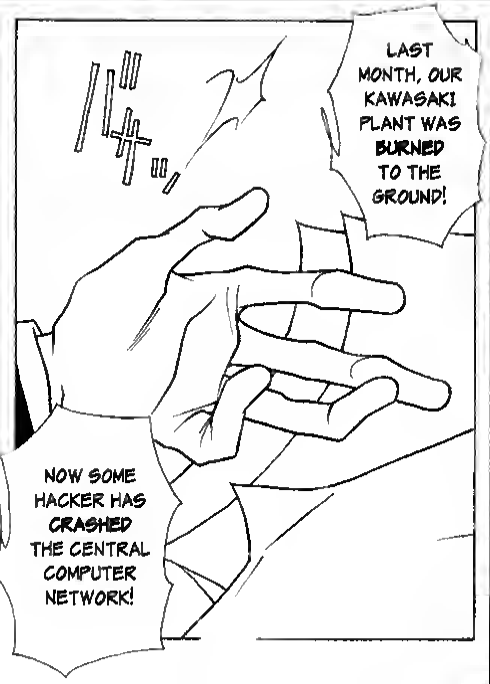


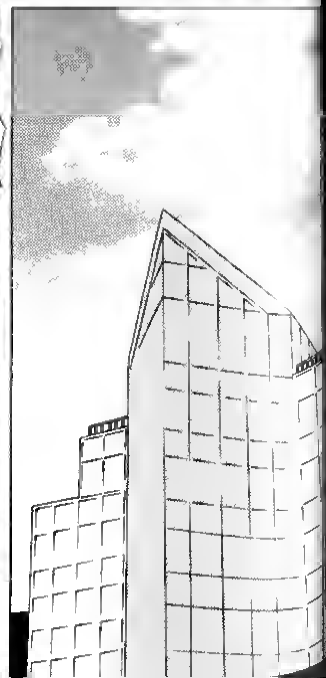
ALL OF US...

I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND EXACTLY WHAT MY FATHER DOES TO MAKE MY MOTHER SO ANGRY.
...BUT I KNOW THAT WOMAN IS WHY WE'RE ALL UNHAPPY.
CHIYUKI? WHAT--
I MUSTN'T MAKE A MISTAKE.
IT'S LIKE A MATH PROBLEM. FOUR TAKE AWAY ONE EQUALS HAPPINESS.
Tick!
Tick!
Tick!

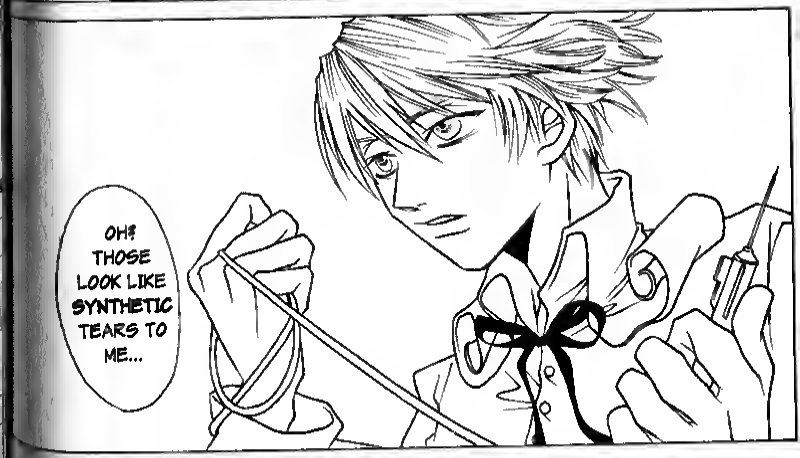
LIST 12

Aiiieee


LAST MONTH, OUR KAWASAKI PLANT WAS BURNED TO THE GROUND!
NOW SOME HACKER HAS CRASHED THE CENTRAL COMPUTER NETWORK!



I'M... HUMAN!
...HELP ME!
OH GOD...


OH! THOSE LOOK LIKE SYNTHETIC TEARS TO ME...

YES. AND FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS! DID YOU SANCTION THE ATTACKS ON DOLL RETAILERS?
YEAH. I DID. AND IF A FEW CUSTOMERS GOT KILLED IN THE PROCESS, SO WHAT? AT LEAST NOW THEY HAVE TO TAKE US SERIOUSLY!
HEH, H H
EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT US!
WE'RE SPLASHED ACROSS ALL THE NEWSPAPERS AGAIN TODAY, FRONT PAGE HEADLINES!
NOT KILL THE PEOPLE WHOSE LIVELIHOOD AND STATUS WE'RE TRYING TO PROTECT!
THAT ISN'T WHAT WE'RE ABOUT, SAGAWA! OUR AIM IS TO PROTECT HUMAN VALUES, HUMAN JOBS, HUMAN IDEALS.
SIR! WE'VE BEEN TARGETED BY A GROUP THAT CLAIMS THAT OUR ADVANCED STEROL-S DOLL PROGRAM IS UNETHICAL. THEY--
IF WE DON'T ACT DECISIVELY, OUR SHAREHOLDERS WILL PANIC AND SG STOCK WILL PLUMMET
THIS IS LOOKING LIKE A COORDINATED ATTACK ON THE SG CORPORATION...
.. AND I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S BEING DONE TO STOP IT.
YES, SIR!
FIND THEM! SHUT THEM DOWN! STOP AT NOTHING...
HAVE YOU SEEN THESE?
HA HA HA HA!

...OF THE DOLL THAT KILLED MY SON!
WOW. ALL THIS TIME WORKING FOR SG...
ASSASSIN DOLL.
WHAT'S THIS?
...AND I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THIS DEPARTMENT EXISTED!
IT DOESN'T. NOT OFFICIALLY, ANYWAY. DISPOSALS HAS ITS OWN BURIED BUDGET--YOU WON'T FIND IT ON ANY OFFICIAL COMPANY REPORT.

SAGAWA!
WELL MAYBE YOUR WAY IS THE WRONG WAY. MAYBE I SHOULD...
AH!
WHAT-EVER!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
I LEAD THIS GROUP. YOU DO AS I SAY! YOU DON'T LIKE IT--GET OUT!
I CAN STILL FEEL THE COLD, ARTIFICIAL HANDS..

YES
UH-HUH.
KIRISHIMA? DR. KIRISHIMA?
THE DOLL PIONEER?
YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR MISSION PARAMETERS?

AFTER HER MENTAL BREAKDOWN, DR KIRISHIMA'S HUSBAND, MOTOHITO-SAN, GAVE UP ALL PATENTS ON THE STEROL-2 DOLLS ON THE STRICT UNDERSTANDING..
YEAH? WELL, FOR THE RECORD...
. AND THERE WOULD BE NO TRANSPLANTING OF HUMAN MEMORIES INTO A DOLL.
...THAT NO PART OF THEIR WORK BE USED TO CREATE LIKENESSES OF ACTUAL PEOPLE..

STATE YOUR NAME AND SECURITY CODE.

WHAT? NO!
YEP. SOMETHIN', AIN'T HE?
C'MON, RISE AND SHINE. WORK TO BE DONE..

MY NAME IS S.
AS IN SANCTION. KIRISHIMA SG-000.

BUT OF COURSE, THERE ARE THOSE WHO REMODEL AND UPGRADE DOLLS ILLEGALLY, AND DR. KIRISHIMA WAS WELL AWARE OF THIS.
SO HE CREATED S. A DOLL...
...DESIGNED TO SEEK OUT AND DESTROY ILLEGAL DOLLS!

IN EFFECT, THE DOLLS COULD NOT GET TOO HUMAN. THERE HAD TO BE LIMITS, MORAL THRESHOLDS YOU DIDN'T CROSS. SG MANAGEMENT AGREED.

IT'S HORRIBLE.
HE HAS TO HUNT AND KILL HIS OWN KIND!
WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE A WHOLE LOT OF DOLLS RUNNING AROUND THINKING THEY'RE HUMAN...
...OR MAYBE BETTER THAN HUMAN?
--MA!
MA-MA!

'S,' AS IN...
...SANCTION!
?!
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. RETURNING TO SG-BASE.

KIIK!
AND WE OWE IT TO MANKIND TO CONTINUE THE STEROL-2 LINE
ONLY THAT WE WILL NOT BE INTIMIDATED AND WE WILL NOT YIELD THE SG-CORPORATION IS WORKING ONLY FOR THE BETTERMENT OF MANKIND...
SURE
I'M GOING OUT. YOU KNOW THE SCHEDULE

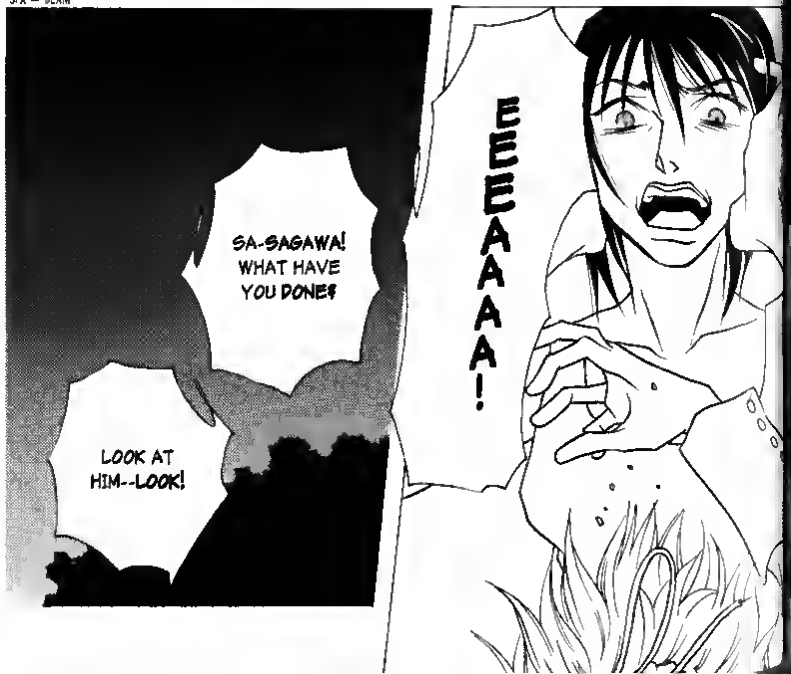
ゴボァ
HUUHH!
ANY COMMENT ON THIS TERRORIST GROUP THAT SEEMS TO BE TARGETING THE SG-CORPORATION?
sob

ER...YES I GUESS. LOOK, I HAVE TO GO.
CAN'T HAVE YOU GOING HOME WITH YOUR SHIRT ALL MESSED UP. CAN WE? YOUR MOM WILL WONDER WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO.
OH THANKS.
RIGHT. OF COURSE--

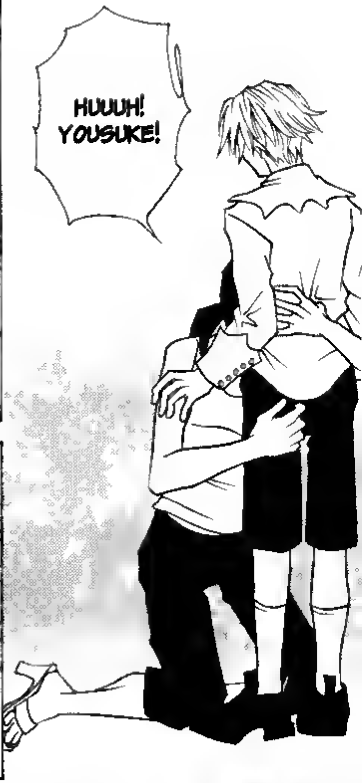
HEY! LET ME HELP YOU WITH THAT...

YOUSUKE!!

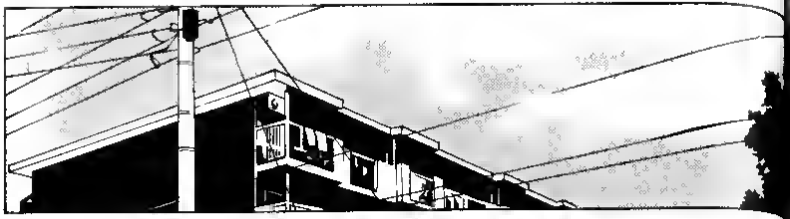
*SFX = BLAM


SA-SAGAWA! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
LOOK AT HIM--LOOK!
EEEAAAA!

HNNNH. I'M... SORRY. CAN I...HOLD YOU A LITTLE LONGER, PLEASE...


HUUUH! YOUSUKE!

LEADER--



I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT!

ONCE AGAIN, YOU DISOBEYED A DIRECT ORDER!
HE WAS...

LUCKY FOR YOU I FOLLOWED HIM...
SG MUST HAVE SENT HIM TO CHECK ME OUT. HE HAD TO BE SILENCED!

OH!
HE'S A DOLL!
A STINKING SG INFILTRATION DOLL!

SAGAWA! NO--

LOOK AT THIS...
...GOT HIS BRAINS BLOWN OUT AND STILL GOT THE GOODS!
OH. THAT'S INCRE IBLE.
PURE DUMB LUCK IS WHAT IT IS! A ROUTINE SEARC AND SANCTION ON A DOLL. AND HE FINDS THE TERRORISTS EVERYONE'S LOOKING FOR!
GUESS THEY DIDN'T KNOW...
...THAT'S DOESN'T JUST KEEP HIS BRAINS UNDER HIS HAT!

JUST... GO.
WHAT? THAT 'CHILD' IS EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING AGAINST! YOU CAN'T FEEL SORRY FOR IT!
.. JUST A CHILD!
GET OUT. GET OUT!!
WHAT-EVER

DO YOU UNDER-STAND YOUR MISSION?
COMPLETELY.
HEY, SAGAWA!
NO, AND ANYWAY...
I CAN'T CONTACT THE LEADER. ANY IDEA WHERE SHE IS?
...SHE'S HANDED OVER COMMAND OF OPERATIONS TO ME.
BUT--

OKAY, S, NAP-TIME'S OVER. GOT A REAL IMPORTANT JOB FOR YOU THIS TIME!
WHILE HE'S PLAYING DEAD, AND THEY'RE FLAPPING THEIR MOUTHS...
...THE BACK-UP A.I. SYSTEMS IN HIS LOWER SPINE ARE RECORDING EVERYTHING!
WHAT IS YOUR COMMAND?
MY NAME IS S...
...AS IN SANCTION!
THE MAN WHO SHOT YOU...
...I WANT YOU TO BRING HIM, AND ANY OTHERS IN HIS GROUP, HERE!

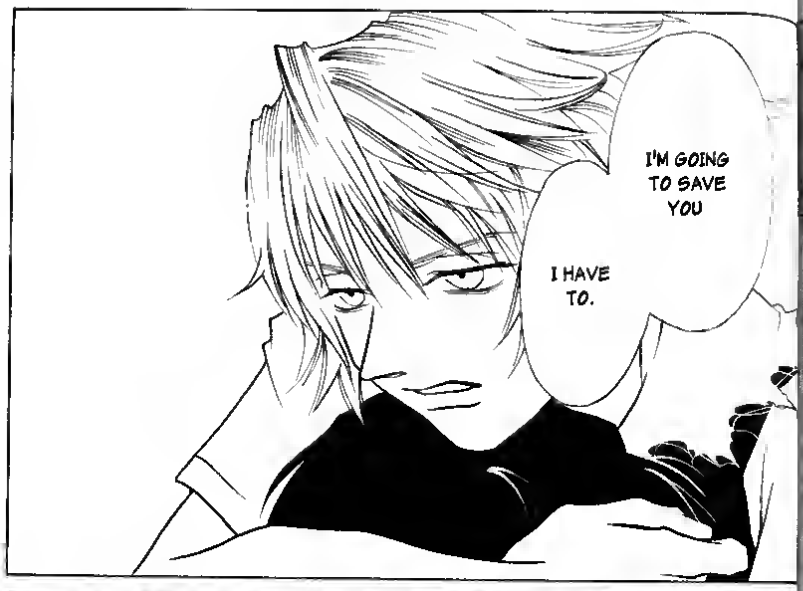
MOVE OR, MAKE A SOUND, AND I'LL SNAP YOUR NECK LIKE A TWIG!
I DO AS I'M TOLD.
Y-YOU!
I THOUGHT--
NO! I'LL MAKE A DEAL...I'M NOT THE ONE YOU WANT. I'LL...TAKE TO YOU TO THE LEADER, OKAY?
W-WAIT! YOU'RE A DOLL! YOU...CAN'T HURT ME. YOU CAN'T KILL ME!
GUESS SHE JUST COULDN'T STOMACH IT ANY MORE. COULDN'T DO WHAT REALLY HAD TO BE DONE!
WE PROCEED WITH THE NEXT BOMBING AS PLANNED!
LET'S GO!
CREEP!

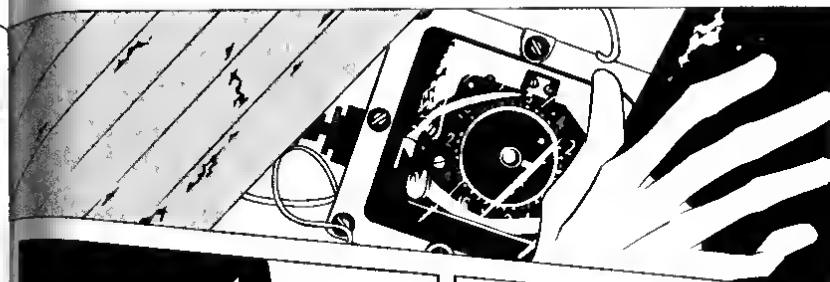
HHHHH...
THANK YOU.
NOW I'VE BEEN BETRAYED BY SOMEONE I TRUSTED AND SAVED BY ONE OF THE DOLLS I HATE!
ALL IN ONE MORNING!
MMM-NN! MM-NNN!
WHY DO YOU HATE DOLLS?
WE ALL HAVE OUR REASONS...

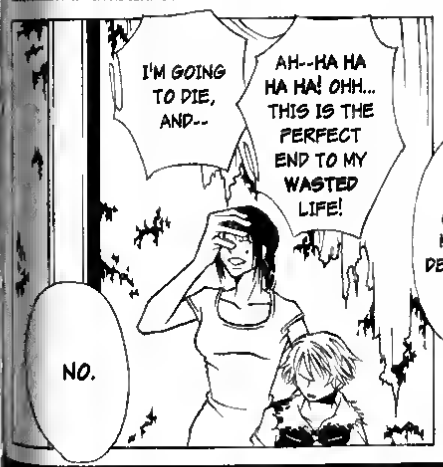
YEP.
SHE'S HERE!!
AFTER YOU!
Chhkt!
SLAM!

I USED IT..
...TO FUND THIS GROUP, TO STRIKE BACK!
THOUGH NO ONE CAME RIGHT OUT AND SAID IT, THEY ALL BLAMED ME. SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT HIM ALONE WITH THE DOLL, YOU KNOW?
THE SG CORPORATION WANTED THE STORY BURIED. THEY PAID ME OFF, AND I TOOK THEIR BLOOD MONEY.
HE'D HAVE BEEN ABOUT YOUR AGE, HAD HE LIVED...
WAIT! LISTEN..
THAT NOISE!

FOR MANY IT'S BECAUSE THEY LOST THEIR JOBS TO DOLLS.
FOR OTHERS DOLLS REPRESENT AN UNNATURAL EVOLUTION, AN INSULT TO GOD. FOR SOME, LIKE SAGAWA, IT'S ABOUT REVENGE. A DOLL REPORTED HIM TO THE COPS
HE WAS JUST SIX MONTHS OLD. OUR DOLL NANNY WAS BATHING HIM..
SHE...SHORT-CIRCUITED, COLLAPSED ON TOP OF HIM. SOME KIND OF DEFECT.
AND ME? IT'S ALL FOR MY SON.
BY THE TIME I FOUND THEM, DRAGGED HER OFF...
..HE WAS DEAD.. DROWNED.


I'M GOING TO SAVE YOU
I HAVE TO.



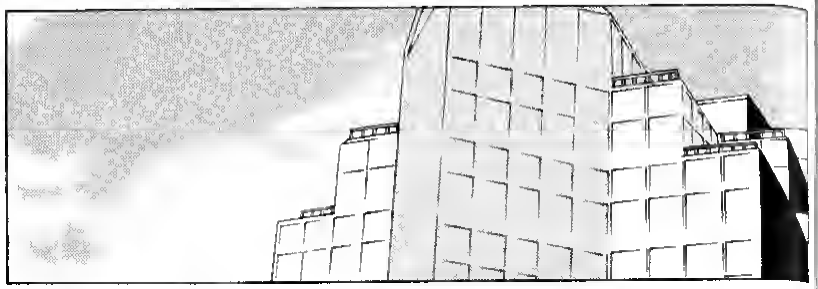

I'M GOING TO DIE, AND--
AH--HA HA HA HA! OHH... THIS IS THE PERFECT END TO MY WASTED LIFE!
NO.

SAGAWA...
THAT MURDEROUS BASTARD!
ONLY ONE MINUTE TO DETONATION..

YOU'RE NOT.

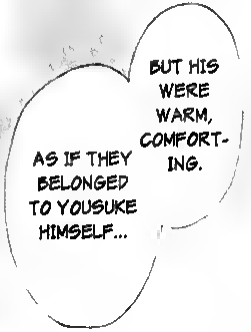
I SEE...
SAGAWA'S BEEN ARRESTED
IT'S STRANGE
YOUR LAWYER WILL BE HERE FIRST THING TOMORROW, AND--
YOU'LL BE FORMALLY CHARGED ONCE YOU'RE RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL.
THE DOLL THAT KILLED MY SON. HER HANDS WERE COLD. ARTIFICIAL

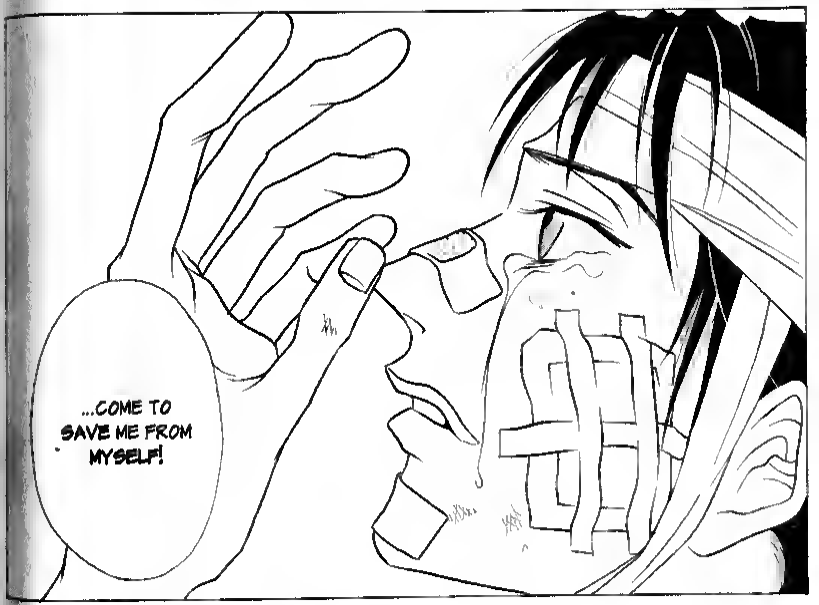
DAMMIT! LET ME GO...

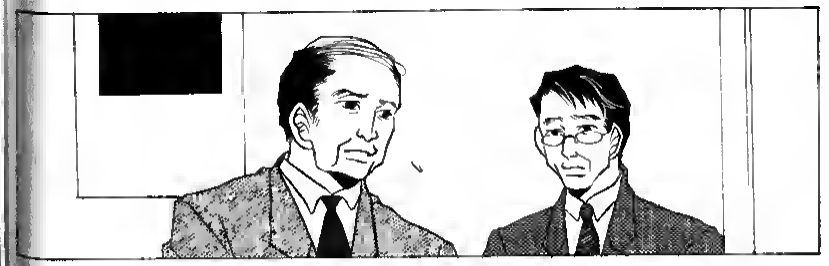


WAKE UP...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

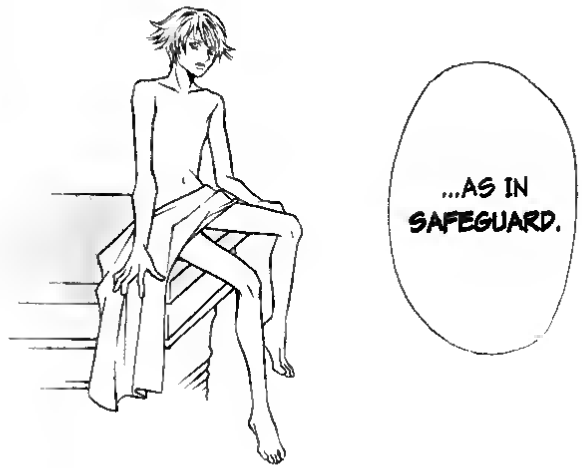
AMAZING! YOU WOULDN'T THINK HE'D ABSORBED THE FULL IMPACT OF A BOMB BLAST.
AH, DOESN'T MUCH MATTER WHAT YOU DO TO THE BODY. AS LONG AS THE AI CHIP REMAINS INTACT, AND THAT'S PROTECTED.


BUT HIS WERE WARM, COMFORTING.
AS IF THEY BELONGED TO YOUSUKE HIMSELF...

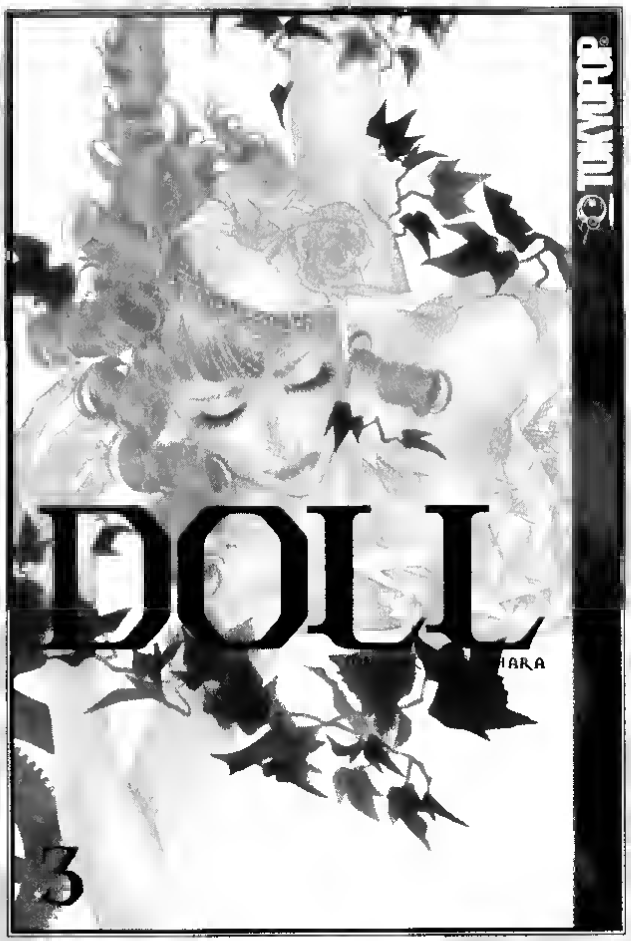

...COME TO SAVE ME FROM MYSELF!



Mitsukazu Mihara debuted in 1994 with the short "Gomu no Iranai Kodomo-tachi," winning a contest for the magazine Feeling Young. Mitsukazu Mihara is particularly famous for the "Gothic Lolita" fashions that she dresses her characters in. Another famous series of hers besides *Doll* is *Happy Family*, a manga about the family of a boy with an Oedipus complex.



Simon Furman is a writer for comic books and TV animation, his name inextricably linked with *Transformers,* the 80s toy phenomenon. He has written literally hundreds of stories about the war-torn 'robots in disguise', for several different publishers. In addition to his writing credits, Furman has served as editor on many comic books and graphic novels.



IN THE NEXT VOLUME OF

DOLL

FIVE NEW TALES OF
ANDROIDS AND ANGST, INCLUDING:

SEXAROID

Some Dolls are created strictly for pleasure, and some pleasures require Dolls that are built unlike any humans. What special "optional extras" will it take to truly satisfy the darkest human desires?

JUN

It's sometimes hard to explain the basis of attraction... and the weirder the turn-on, the more difficult it gets. When Jun sees a psychiatrist to help him explain his fragmented memories and unusual fantasies, will the answers set him free or ruin him forever?

BABY DOLL

Sometimes, even when a scientist or engineer creates something with the very best of intentions, things still somehow get turned around, twisted, or perverted. So what happens when a scientist or engineer creates something with the very worst of intentions?

ANGEL

Mami is a girl who is tormented by her classmates. Orie is a doll who is abused by her owner. Both desperately hope for an angel to save them. Whose prayer--if anyone's--will be answered?